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"THE APOSTLE OF THE INDIANS OF GUIANA."

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"THE APOSTLE OF THE INDIANS OF GUIANA"

A Memoir of the Life and Labours

OF THE

REV. W. H. BRETT, B.D.

For Forty Years a Missionary in British Guiana

BY THE

REV. F. P. L. JOSA

RECTOR OF HOLY TRINITY, ESSEQUIBO

LONDON:
WELLS GARDNER, DARTON & CO.
PATERNOSTER BUILDINGS.

1888

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TO THE

REVEREND FREDERIC CHARLES FINCH, LL.D.,

WHOSE LIFE HAS BEEN ONE OF NOBLE DEVOTION AND
SELF-DENIAL IN THE INTEREST OF THE CHURCH,
AND TO WHOM THE WRITER OWES AN
UNDISCHARGEABLE DEBT OF
GRATITUDE,

This Memoir

IS DEDICATED AS A SMALL TOKEN OF RESPECT
AND ESTEEM.

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PREFACE.

The substance of the following pages first appeared in the columns of the *Demerara Royal Gazette*, and are mainly compiled from Mr. Brett's own books—*Indian Missions in British Guiana*, *The Indian Tribes of British Guiana*, *Mission Work among the Indian Tribes of British Guiana*, and *Legends and Myths of Guiana*.

My object in compiling them has been to give an account of the mission-work of this most eminent missionary in British Guiana, rather than to produce a narrative of his life, though this has not been altogether lost sight of.

The illustrations, from sketches made by Mr. Brett, have previously appeared either in his books or in publications of the S. P. G., but they are so very good, and so necessary to any account of his work, that I need not, I am sure, apologise for reproducing them.

My hearty thanks are due to Mrs. Brett for her kind permission to make use of her husband's books and sketches, and also to the late Rev. Canon Veness, of Guiana, for aid in preparing this Memoir, and to the Rev. H. Rowley, for helping me to bring it out in its present form.

F. P. L. JOSA.

December, 1887.

THE LIFE AND LABOURS

OF

WILLIAM HENRY BRETT.

CHAPTER I.

Early days of William Henry Brett—Schools—The Rev. T. Medland—Selwyn—Narrative of voyage from England to Barbadoes, and thence to Guiana.

William Henry Brett was born at Dover on the Feast of St. Thomas, the 21st of December 1818. That his birth should have taken place on the festal day of this Apostle, who was the great missionary of the distant Indies, is a coincidence worthy of note. We are told that it was through the exertions of this Saint that we owe the evangelisation of the Malabar Coast in South India, and to William Henry Brett we owe, under God, the conversion of entire tribes of Indians in British Guiana. We feel sure that had Mr. Brett ever thought on this extraordinary coincidence, he would have exclaimed, as he did on an occasion when a like coincidence was pointed out to him, "It is one of those singular things which sometimes happen, and seem to indicate an overruling and providential influence."

His father died when he was a very young child, and,

his mother having the care of a second family, he was brought up by a pious grandfather. He very early evinced a studious and thoughtful disposition, and he had a wonderfully retentive memory, which was of great service to him in after years. From a very early age reading was an absorbing passion with him. The school to which he was sent was conducted by an elderly lady, who fostered his talents and supplied him with suitable books. He was afterwards sent to a day-school, where the master offered the loan of books to those boys who did their lessons best and most quickly. Under these circumstances, young Brett was not long in attracting attention, and he soon became his master's favourite scholar. He had, previously to this, attended a Sunday-school, then in its infancy, in the parish of St. James, in which the curate, the Rev. Thomas Medland (afterwards Vicar of Steyning, Sussex), took a deep interest. His attention was soon drawn to the steady, studious lad, and he too lent him books, amongst others, the "Life of Henry Martyn," which subsequently led to his consecrating himself to missionary work. At the age of thirteen or fourteen, Mr. Medland made him one of his Sunday-school teachers, and he subsequently became an assistant superintendent.

We are told that "no one could have been a more regular or a better teacher than Brett," and he continued to labour in the Sunday-school for nearly ten years, until, indeed, he left Dover. He was most anxious that the children under his care should be Christians, not only in name, but in reality. Sometimes he would walk with them along the seashore, and talk to them very earnestly about the duty and happiness of serving God faithfully; and he would sometimes take them to a cave, and there kneel down and pray with them.

But besides his duties as teacher in the Sunday-school, our future missionary had his daily work to attend to. At one time he was apprenticed to a tailor; but his master having failed, he never served his time, and had to earn his bread by doing any work that he could get. He gained some influence amongst the townsfolk of Dover by his steadiness of character and by his abstemious habits.

It may be seen from this account that the education which the future missionary received was very slender, but it must not be thence concluded that education is unnecessary for the mission-field. Men of the highest ability, men who have received the most liberal education, are the persons required for the work. There is an idea afloat that any one will do for the work of the Church in foreign lands. This is a mistake, and the sooner it is rectified the better. It may be that some of the most successful missionaries have been self-taught men, and such a one Mr. Brett proved to be. Extracts from his works, given later on, will show that his English was singularly pure and of considerable force. Most of the knowledge that he acquired was self-acquired, and was by no means confined to a narrow range. He was a fair Latin and Greek scholar, and his knowledge of his Greek Testament was very good. He set aside a part of every day for the reading at least of one chapter of the New Testament. This he continued to do as long as his health permitted him, that is to say, to within a few months of his death. The translator of portions of the Old Testament into four different languages must of necessity have known something of Hebrew. French, Spanish, and Portuguese were sufficiently known to him to enable him to read anything in those tongues that came in his way.

Young Brett was carefully watched by Mr. Medland, who thought that he would do excellent work in the mission-

field as a catechist; and by and bye the opportunity of enlistment in such work occurred. The Rev. H. Duke, Rector of Holy Trinity parish, Essequibo, British Guiana, felt that something ought to be done for the wild Indians of his parish, and he visited one or two of their settlements, and succeeded in baptizing a few of them. Encouraged by this success, he then applied to Bishop Coleridge for a catechist, and he in his turn applied to the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in foreign parts. About this time Mr. Medland had recommended young Brett to this Society, and he had gone up to London for his examination. It was on this occasion that he first came in contact with one of the greatest missionaries of the nineteenth century, George Augustus Selwyn, for the latter had been appointed by the Missionary Board to examine him. On this occasion two men of like mind stood face to face—two men who, though separated by vast oceans, were yet to do the greatest work in the mission-field—one as a bishop of the Church in New Zealand, the other as a priest in Guiana—one with the best and noblest training that Eton and Cambridge could give, the other with the limited education such as a humble school at Dover and the few spare hours of a busy curate could give. And yet the two, the examiner and examinee, each in his own sphere, have made a name for themselves that will last as long as the lands where they respectively laboured—aye, and longer, for are not their names written in "the Book of Life"? Selwyn and Brett parted. They met once again in 1868, on board the royal mail steamer *Neva*. The Bishop and Mrs. Selwyn were going out to take leave of the New Zealand diocese; Mr. Brett and family were returning to Guiana after a year's visit to England. They parted on board the steamer at the island of St. Thomas, with

mutual regrets that they could not be fellow-voyagers on the longer journey, but we may rest assured that they have met again in the "Better Land," and are now enjoying together their well-earned rest.

Mr. Medland was delighted when he heard that the Society had accepted his *protégé*. And as probably there will be no opportunity of referring to Mr. Medland elsewhere, it may be as well to state here that he remained on terms of close friendship with Mr. Brett to the end of his days. Mr. Brett spent some time with him at Steyning during the three several visits he made to England in 1849, 1867, and 1874. The writer had the privilege of seeing the venerable Vicar of Steyning in 1881, and then, although bedridden, he still showed unshaken love and the greatest veneration for his former pupil, with whom he kept up a close correspondence until increasing infirmities on both sides caused its cessation. Mr. Medland passed away to his rest in 1882.

Mr. Brett had just entered his twenty-second year when he sailed from England for British Guiana, the only colony, by the way, that England possesses in South America. Unfortunately he did not keep a diary, but he has left us a narrative of his first voyage which is given *in extenso*.

"In February 1840 I left England for missionary work amongst the aborigines of Guiana.

"It was the time of the Queen's marriage. I had seen Prince Albert land at Dover, my native town, and pass slowly through it amidst the waving of handkerchiefs and hearty rejoicings of the people. The same feeling was manifested everywhere, the whole South of England (or as much of it as could be seen from the top of the mail-coach) being in a state of loyal excitement. The print-shops of Exeter and Falmouth were surrounded by crowds gazing at

the portraits of the Queen and the Prince; and even on board the mail-packet the passengers discussed the royal marriage. But the weather was stormy, and ere we reached the Lizard, sea-sickness and night came upon us together.

"These were the olden times, when steam navigation was only feeling its way upon the ocean. In those days the mails were sent to the West Indies monthly, and in ten-gun brigs. Our packet was the *Penguin*. We encountered very heavy weather for the first fortnight, though making progress, as the gales were not dead against us.

"Few passengers were able to appear on deck during the first week. But when we were about 300 miles to the westward of Madeira, the cry that a 'ship in distress' was 'in sight' brought all of us from our berths to look at her.

"We found that our commander had altered his course, and that we were running down before the wind towards a vessel, whose hull we could not discern above the tempestuous waves. Her three masts were standing, and her canvas, even to top-gallant sails, was set; but all had been blown to ribbons, and now looked like so many flags streaming horizontally from the yards. She was a water-logged, timber-laden ship, and as we drew near, we saw the waves bursting upon her deck, and pouring like cataracts over the lee side, as she heaved heavily up and down. Her stern was broken in, and of her name there only remained 'D,' the first letter. Boards and planks were working their way through that breach into the sea, and floating all round her. The crew had evidently taken shelter in the tops, and made there canvas tents of the torn sails. Whether they were living or dead we could not tell, and were all in a state of anxious excitement about them. A round dark object, which looked like a man's head, was protruding from the mizzen-top. Our crew hailed, but no

reply came; and the passengers said, 'Poor fellow! he must be too exhausted to call out.'

"As we ran in nearer, we heard a faint wail of misery from the wreck, which made us shudder, and caused the men who had manned one boat to pull more strenuously to the rescue. For some time they could not get on board, but at last one jumped on to the forecastle, and we then heard the same feeble cry as before.

"We saw the boat's crew ascend the rigging and overhaul the tops, and bring down something from one of them; after which they tenderly lifted from the forecastle into the boat what seemed to be a child in dark clothing, and pulled back to us.

"It was not a child, however, but a dog, which they had rescued. And such a dog! I have since seen hundreds of Indian hunting-dogs, looking all skin and bone, but never such a sight as that poor dog presented. The skin of his belly seemed cleaving to his backbone, and it was marvellous how such a miserable object could still retain life.

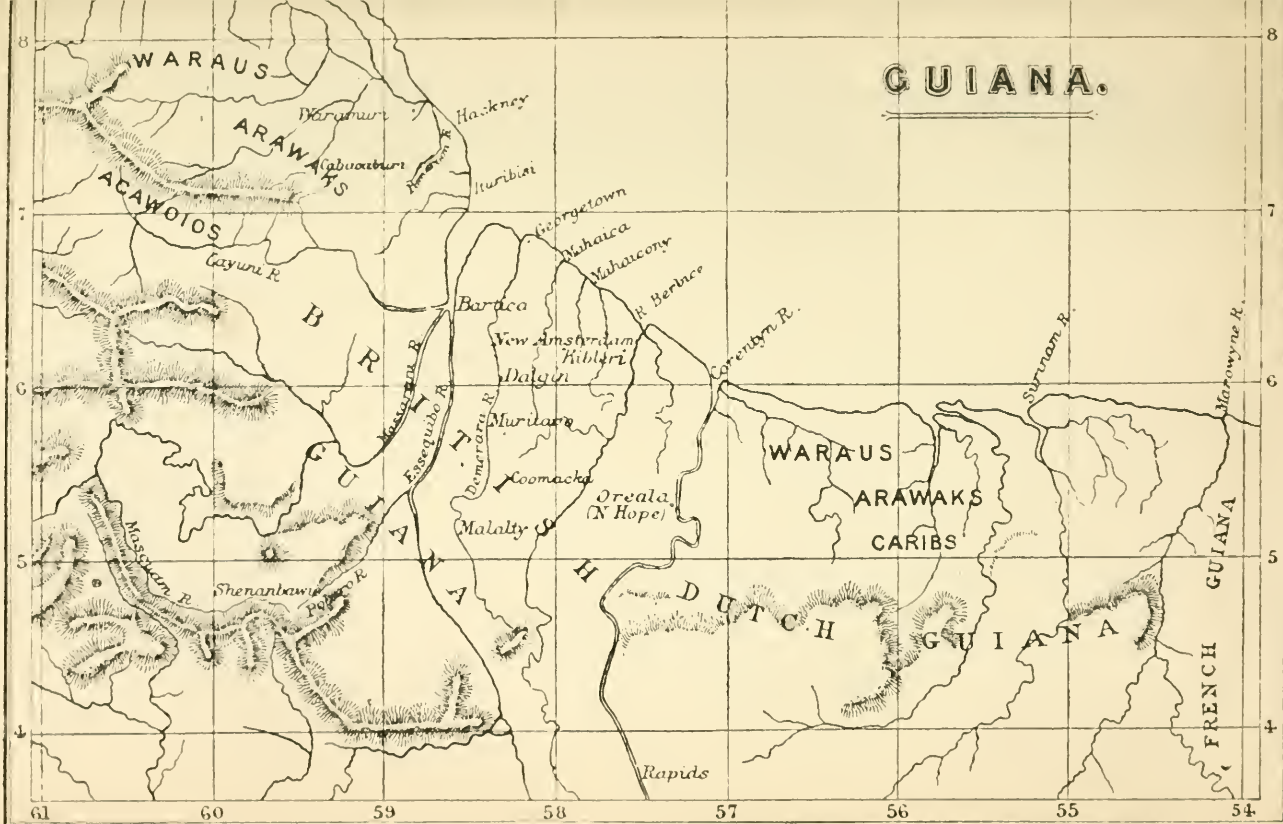
"Our doctor took him in hand, and dropped two or three slices of meat, cut very small and thin, and a very little water, into his mouth as he lay on the deck. Then our commander's dog, a huge mastiff, came and smelt him, turning away rather contemptuously, and finally he was borne forward to the berths of the men, who were not a little pleased at having saved him. No men, living or dead, were found on the water-logged ship. The crew had evidently lived some days in the tops, and had not been starved, for the round object we had mistaken for a man's head was a bag containing biscuit, and water was still left in a keg. A poor cat, which could not get at either biscuit or water, was lying there dead. The captain's desk was

brought away by our men. From it we learned that the derelict was the *Dorothea* of St. John's, New Brunswick. But no one knew how the crew had left the vessel, or what had become of them. On the forecastle, near the dog, were found the enormous horns of an elk or moose deer, which the poor animal had gnawed in his ravenous hunger. These were brought on board with him. Some of the projecting points had been thus consumed, and fresh marks of his teeth were visible on the edges of the broad blades. A few days after this we were enjoying warm weather, as our vessel lazily rolled on with the trade wind. The order, discipline, and cleanliness of a man-of-war, albeit only a small brig, were gratifying to witness.

"Sometimes the men were exercising the guns or preparing to resist boarders, going through the forms of a naval engagement. The Sunday at sea was, however, to me the most interesting thing. The demeanour of both men and officers during Divine service was reverent, as beseemed those who were in peril on the sea continually; and during the after part of the Lord's day many of the sailors brought out Bibles, and Prayer-books, and religious tracts, and sat reading them.

"Meanwhile the rescued dog had become the pet of the whole crew. When the doctor had pronounced him convalescent, and removed the restrictions at first placed on his diet, he was to be found in every mess and in every watch. In a fortnight he was getting fat, and having a thick curly coat, he looked fatter than he really was. No one could find out his former name, for he answered to none. So, as it was necessary to give him some name, he was called 'Wreck,' in remembrance of the scene of his former sufferings.

"'Wreck' had been taught various accomplishments by


GUIANA.
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Kiblîri
Dalgin
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Oreala (N Hope)
Malalty
Massaruni R.
Essequibo R.
Demerara R.
Corentyn R.
Surinam R.
Marowyne R.
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ARAWAKS
CARIBS
BRITISH GUIANA
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his former masters. When half a dozen men were hauling at a rope, he would encourage them by a cheerful bark and a few jumps, then seize the slack with his mouth and pull too. He would run and fetch any small object that might be sent rolling along the deck; and if a sailor looked over the side of the ship and said 'Fish,' he would jump up, place his forefeet on the bulwarks, and assume the knowing aspect of a pointer with a bird before him, to the great amusement of the men. These accomplishments brought poor 'Wreck' into serious trouble before the voyage ended. The captain's old mastiff viewed with secret indignation the tricks of the parvenu, and saw even the passengers, whom he considered in some respects his own property, faithlessly amusing themselves with him. One day something was thrown by a young passenger, which rebounded on to the quarter-deck. 'Wreck' sprang up to fetch it, and was immediately seized by his powerful rival, and received a terrible shaking. Of course he was pulled away as soon as possible, but after that mauling he never ventured up there again. The mastiff allowed him the whole run forward, and never interfered with him there; being apparently satisfied with having vindicated his own exclusive right to the quarter-deck, and shown the intruder that naval discipline and distinctions must be observed by dogs as well as by men.

"'Wreck's' next mishap was still more serious. One evening a sailor said 'Fish,' and the dog sprang up to point as usual; but the brig giving a heavy lurch at the same instant, his feet slipped forward, and he went headlong into the sea. A loud cry of 'Overboard! he's overboard!' was raised; and a dark object passed rapidly from us in the white foam of our wake, which I at first thought was a man. So thought our commander, who was shaving at one of the

windows of his own stern cabin, and he shouted up orders to 'bring to and lower a boat.' Very promptly these orders were obeyed, but ere the boat could be manned the dog was lost to our sight among the billows. A man at the masthead could see him, however, and pointed with his arms like a semaphore in the right direction, until it grew so dark that even the boat was lost to view.

"Meanwhile the commander had come on deck, and seemed much surprised to hear that it was only the dog which had gone overboard. It was necessary, however, to wait for the boat, which at length came alongside, having rescued the unlucky animal from death a second time. As 'Wreck' was handed up the gangway, where all were again waiting to receive him, our commander gave him notice (probably intended for the crew) that that was 'the last time H.M. mail-packet would be delayed' to help him. To this he replied, in dog's fashion, by a deprecatory wag of the tail, and shaking the remaining salt water over us from his shaggy sides. But during the remainder of the voyage I never saw his attention called to a 'fish' again.

"On the twenty-eighth day after leaving Falmouth we sighted Barbadoes, looking like a golden bank on the western horizon, in the reflected rays of the rising sun. As we ran round the south-western extremity of the island, the cocoa-nut and other palms showed that we were in the tropical regions of the New World, and the contrast between the numerous white cottages and the deep green of the vegetation struck me as exceedingly beautiful.

"We were congratulated on our passage; for the mail which had left England the previous month had met unfavourable weather, and only got in just before our

arrival. The Barbadians had thus two months' news together, and were soon loyally discussing the marriage of the Queen. My companion, the Rev. C. Carter, and myself were most kindly received by Dr. Coleridge, the first Bishop of the diocese, which then included the Leeward Islands and Guiana. During a month's residence at Bishop's Court, I learned to love and revere him. When we left for Guiana, he gave me his blessing, and a few books, the engravings in which I afterwards found useful in attracting the attention of wild races, whose languages were yet to be learned."

Thus far Mr. Brett wrote. After leaving Barbadoes, four or five days' sail brought him to the vast South American continent.

CHAPTER II.

The Guianas—British Guiana—A Description of the country and its inhabitants—The Indians—Houses—Food—Drink—Paiwarri feasts.

A SHORT account of Guiana, where Mr. Brett laboured so well and so faithfully, may not be considered out of place here. If, on opening an atlas of South America, the reader will look at the north-east shoulder, he will find several Guianas mapped out. First, there is Venezuela, or Spanish Guiana; next in order is British Guiana; this is followed by Surinam, or Dutch Guiana; and this again by French Guiana, or Cayenne, where there is a well-known penal settlement of France. British Guiana lies between 8° 40′ north lat., and 3° 30′ south lat., and between the 50th and 68th degrees of west longitude. It is divided into three counties, called respectively Demerara, Essequibo, and Berbice, after the names of three of the largest rivers in the colony. The three counties have a coast-line of 200 miles, being bordered on the north by the Atlantic, on the east by Dutch Guiana, on the west by Venezuela, and on the south by the Brazils. Thus the coast-lands are laved by the Atlantic, the trade winds of which make the climate very healthy for about nine months in the year. The thermometer all the year round is at an average of 81 degrees.

Guiana was held by the Dutch from 1580 till 1803, when the fortunes of war placed it in the hands of the British

and the French. At the time of the arrival of Mr. Brett, the population of the British colony amounted to 98,154, not including Indians, which latter have been variously estimated at 7000, 20,000, and 50,000—so unknown is the interior of the country still. The following table will show how the population—principally through immigration—has been augmented. At the time that Mr. Brett became Rector of Holy Trinity the population had increased to the number of 127,695, whilst by the last census in 1881 it was 252,186, so that by this time the census of 1851 must be doubled, as from three to four thousand souls come from India every year.

The following statistics are given, as they may prove interesting :—

BIRTHPLACES OF THE PEOPLE.	1851.	1861.	1871.	1881.
British Guiana	86,451	93,861	113,570	149,639
West India Islands	9,278	8,309	13,385	18,318
Madeira, Azores, and Cape de Verde	7,928	9,859	7,925	6,879
Europe	2,088	1,482	1,444	1,617
North America		147	196	205
Places not mentioned before		293	322	897
Immigrants from Africa	14,251	9,299	7,541	5,077
Immigrants from Madras	3,665	3,664	2,535	65,161
Immigrants from Calcutta	4,017	18,416	40,146	
Immigrants from China	...	2,629	6,295	4,393
Born at sea	17	28	46	...
Not known	...	34	86	...
Grand totals	127,695	148,026	193,491	252,186

The chief products of the country are sugar and rum, but several minor industries have been brought to the fore, owing to the depression of the sugar trade; and lately, especially in 1886, gold has been found in paying quantities.

Georgetown, the capital, is situated at the mouth of the River Demerara, on its eastern bank. It is a city of some

50,000 inhabitants; its streets are well laid out with canals in the Dutch fashion, and are parallel to each other, running north and south, east and west. The houses are very picturesque as well as pleasant to live in, owing to the beautiful trees, and cabbage-palms, and variegated vegetation that generally environ them. From the statistics above given, one may imagine how motley the crowd is to be met with in the streets of Georgetown, and in every village and estate throughout the country. There stands the European at the head of his establishment, with clerks, either Europeans or natives of the colony; a little farther on you see the wealthy and industrious Portuguese from Madeira, whose position is every day becoming more important; and then we see the ever-busy Chinese dressed in their country fashion, who make capital "sugar-curers" and petty shopkeepers. But these are not all; indeed the bulk of the population consists of Africans and their descendants, and East Indians, usually called "Coolies." As is well known, the Africans were originally brought to the continent of America through the efforts of one of the most tender-hearted of men—the saintly Las Casas—for the sole purpose of saving the aboriginal Indians. The Africans and their descendants now all speak English, and they are all nominally Christians. They are fond of gay attire, and many make display of all they possess on their persons. The religious and moral state of these people is still far from what it should be, especially as regards marriage, and the clergy are too few in number to grapple successfully with the situation. For instance, in the parish of Holy Trinity there are only two clergymen of the Church of England for a population of 14,000, on a coast-line of some fifteen miles. A Romish priest divides his time between this parish, a neighbouring one, and a mission

among the Indians—a two hours' pull from our mission at Waramuri—which, by the way, is the only mission of the Church of Rome among the Indians. A Wesleyan minister also visits this parish at times.

As regards the "Coolies," there are Afghans from the mountains of Afghanistan, who are Mohammedans; Nepaulese, whose features remind one of the Caucasian race; a few Bengalese, also a fair number of Madrassees; but the bulk of the East Indians came hither from the North-West Provinces of India. The languages spoken by these peoples are various and difficult, but Hindi is the one which is best spoken and the most easily learned. If one knows some Urdu, he will be all the more respected. The religion of the Indian immigrant is either Brahmanism in some form or other or Mohammedanism. Possibly, for every twenty Mohammedans in the colony there are seventy-five Hindus and five Christians. The Church has still a great and arduous work before her ere all these nations are brought to the full knowledge of the Gospel of Christ.

There is another race to describe, which is the one above all that owes so much to the noble work of Mr. Brett—the aboriginal Indians. These are easily distinguished from the rest of the population by the copper-like tint of their skin. They are quiet, unobtrusive, and in the towns and on the coast seem as though they were wanting in ordinary intelligence. They seldom look at one full in the face. The women's eyes are a pattern of what a modest woman's eyes should be, being generally turned in the direction of the ground. They are apathetic to an astonishing degree. They do not *seem* to feel like other folk; their sympathies appear dormant. When we look back and see the wonders accomplished by Mr. Brett, we must, however,

conclude that the love of God in sending His Son to save them did really and truly touch their hearts.

The Indians in the town and the Indians in their forest home are different beings, however. When on the coast or in town, they feel out of their element; they are seen best *at home* in their Benabs. The Benabs are of three different types. The Warraus build their houses on piles in swamps; the other tribes that reside in the forests are sheltered on all sides, and they merely put up a roof on slender posts, but on the open savannahs they build their homes with thick clay. The furniture is of the simplest kind and very scanty. It consists of a hammock, a few wooden stores, a bow and arrow or gun, and a few pots and implements for preparing the cassava bread, which is the staple food of the country. Their meat is the produce of the hunting-field, which is chiefly eaten in the shape of "pepper-pot." This is a preparation consisting of peppers and cassareep. The cassareep is a highly poisonous juice of the cassava, which after being boiled becomes a thick liquid. During the process of boiling it loses its poisonous property. This cassareep mixed with meat and fish of all kinds serves to preserve them, and it imparts to them its own pleasant flavour. Unless we are much mistaken, the celebrated Worcester sauce is a composition suggested by this very mixture. This dish, by the way, is very common on the coast-lands among the other residents; and there are houses which boast of never allowing it to run down, by replenishing it. The meal of the grated cassava, as has already been said, forms the staple food of the Indians. This is allowed to dry, and then broken and forced through a sieve into powder, and is used for bread-making, which is of the simplest manufacture. It is first spread on a large, generally circular, iron plate, and levelled off by a woman,

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by means of a fan. The heated iron first bakes the bread on one side and then on the other, and then it is placed on the roof of the house to dry properly, after which it is ready for use. It may be kept for an indefinite time. In time of scarcity the Indians manage to subsist on wild berries and many other natural products of the country.

The favourite drink of the Indians is the paiwarri. It has been said that the Gospel is accompanied by the rum-bottle; but these would-be cynics forget that almost all peoples have national drinks of their own, and that such terrible revelries as disgraced the past are numbered among the things that were. It is also forgotten by many that rum, after all, is not a European drink, but that it was originally imported into Europe from the West Indies. These remarks are not intended, however, to justify the European practice of bartering among the Indians by means of rum. It is well known that the Portuguese do an immense amount of harm by this means. But to return to the national drink of the Indians—paiwarri. It is made from cassava bread baked to brownness, broken into large jars or other receptacles, and mixed with water. The process by which fermentation is induced is rather disgusting to the European imagination. The women, whilst they are busy with their household duties, take fairly large pieces of this cassava and masticate it, and when it is done to a turn, replace it in the pot. This mixture, after it has been allowed to stand for some days, ferments, and is then in a fit state for drinking. In days gone by the Indians had periodical drinking bouts—men, women, and children journeying for some hours or days on purpose to have a thorough carouse. The giver of the feast was generally a man who had had a particularly good crop of cassava, or one of the headmen or captains of the place. The morn-

ing after the arrival the feast began in earnest; the men were all painted up, carrying their weapons and a few flutes made of reeds or animal bones. They danced and drank as long as they were able. These drinking bouts fired their brains, and frequently led to quarrels, and sometimes murders.

CHAPTER III.

Bishop Coleridge—Archdeacon Austin—Arrival of Brett—Sent to Pomeroon—Description of Pomeroon—The Rev. C. Carter—The first home—Jeannette—Waraus—Simicici—Sacibara—The first light—Success.

Bishop Coleridge was appointed Bishop of Barbadoes and the Windward Islands in 1824, and on the 11th of May 1836 the colonies of Demerara and Essequibo, as well as Berbice, were annexed to and became parts of his already huge See. In 1836 the Bishop made Essequibo a rural deanery, and appointed William Piercy Austin its first Rural Dean. Mr. Austin was simply made Rural Dean to connect him with the diocese, for he had declined all parochial preferment, having ample means at his disposal; but being willing to help his Rector, the Rev. J. H. Duke. In 1837 he was appointed Ecclesiastical Commissary for Guiana, and the year following he became Archdeacon. When Mr. Brett arrived, he was welcomed by the young Archdeacon, who, after a short residence in Georgetown, sent the youthful missionary to Pomeroon.

Mr. Brett wrote copiously, and we are therefore enabled to give an account of the reception that he received from the Indians in his own words.

"The Pomeroon, or Bowruma (as it is called by the Indians), is of small size when compared with some other rivers in the colony. Its source is on the Sierra Imataca, which is a ridge stretching from the Essequibo to the Orinoco, and gives rise to many large streams.

"The Dutch formed their earliest settlement, which they called Nieuw Zealand, near the Pomeroon, as early as 1580; and in the course of the following century erected towns on the banks, and on those of the Moruca. These were destroyed by the French. The only remains of their settlements are the bricks which are found in some places embedded in the earth.

"The Indians again resumed possession of their lands, and, with the exception of a very few settlers, are the sole occupants at the present day. In that district they are more numerous than in any other.

"About forty-three miles from the sea the Pomeroon receives the waters of its largest tributary, the Arapaiaco. On the banks of the latter, just above the confluence, there was a small strip of cleared land, formerly inhabited by a gang of negroes employed in cutting wood. These negroes, finding life by the rivers rather dull, had taken the earliest opportunity, after their emancipation, of quitting them for the society of their gayer brethren on the coast. But there was still remaining, in the beginning of 1840, three decaying huts, which had been occupied by them.

"There was also a wooden building, which had been used as a place of worship on those rare occasions when they were visited by a clergyman or itinerant catechist. It was, when I first saw it, in a wretched state; the thatched roof being full of large holes, and several of the window-shutters having fallen off. There was free access to wind and rain. Not having been used for a long time, it was almost inaccessible from the long grass and weeds which grew all around in rank luxuriance. The frame of the building was, however, sound, though the boarded sides and floor were much decayed. This was to serve as a mission-chapel.

"One of the three huts before mentioned was occupied by an old white sailmaker, who was sick with ague and fever, and soon after left the place. The next was the dwelling of a kind old negro woman, named Jeannette, who had several black children residing with her. The third, being decayed and abandoned, was at my service. It was a singular and not very inviting residence; the front was boarded and covered with shingles (or wooden tiles); the two ends were of shingles nailed upon laths, and the back was composed of the split trunks of the manicole palms, covered on the outside with the leaves of the trooly. The roof was also thatched, but the thatch was full of holes. It was divided by partitions of rough boards into three apartments, two of which had boarded floors resting on the earth, and very much decayed; and the third had apparently been used for some light kind of blacksmith's work, a block of very tough wood, which had been the anvil, standing firmly fixed in the earthen floor. The situation of the building being low, the water appeared between the chinks of the old floor when the river was swollen by the spring tides, and a number of small frogs were accustomed to come out in wet weather and spring upon the walls, one part of which, being very damp and green, seemed to possess particular attractions for them. The roof was open, and flakes of mingled soot and cobwebs, which had been long collecting there, were continually falling, as the insects which abounded disturbed and shook them down. There was also a large nest of destructive wood-ants, which were devouring the building. These forthwith contrived to get into my clothes-chest, and seriously damage its contents. A dose of arsenic was put into their nest, and in a day or two all were dead or gone. The next task was to whitewash the filthy walls, which abounded with vermin.

"Spiders of all sorts and sizes, numerous fine specimens of the great South American cockroach, and oftentimes the white scorpion or huge bush-centipede, would make their appearance from holes and corners. Pallid-looking unclean lizards, as the wood-slaves, some with monstrous bulbous tails, others which had lost theirs by the fortune of reptile war, would crawl along the beams and sooty rafters; and sometimes falling flat down, lie staring in apparent astonishment, clinging tightly with broad adhesive toes to whatever they chanced to alight on. More graceful and welcome visitors were the olive-green lizards, with mottled coats, that shone like burnished copper. These were useful allies, devouring the insects. One little fellow became in time very tame and friendly, and would allow me to touch him.

"In this wild place it would have been impossible for me to have resided but for the old woman's aid. She immediately saluted me as master, and placed her household at my disposal. A strange-looking black boy, with a defect in one eye, and a small scrap of blue rag as a garment, was, she said, to be my 'butler.' I got that youth to sling his hammock with me in my new abode, not thinking it quite safe to sleep there alone. The first night we were disturbed by some creature getting in at a hole in the roof, which my companion said was a tiger-cat. I was more apprehensive of snakes, which abounded there; but we had no opportunity of ascertaining the nature of our unwelcome visitor, as it was perfectly dark; and, being alarmed at the noise we made, it quickly scrambled out again, and returned no more.

"Having no furniture, it became necessary to borrow some for present use. This was difficult. However, a table with three legs was procured, and the place of a fourth supplied

by a stick from a neighbouring tree. It was, after all, so rickety that it could only stand against the wall. A small chair was also obtained, the seat of which was lower in front than behind, so that a person sitting in it had a tendency to slip off. It was quite a curiosity in its way, and why it was made so it was difficult to conceive. A small bench or form supplied a more convenient seat. In other respects we managed somewhat better, being supplied from a wood-cutting establishment, where there was a small store or shop, from whence rice, plantains, salt fish, and pork might be procured, almost the only food obtainable for several months. This, with the damp situation, was very injurious to health, though other inconveniences were trifling; and it was impossible to refrain from smiling at the grotesque appearance of the dwelling and its contents.

"The river being in front, and a swampy forest behind us, we were obliged to go by water whenever we wished to leave the place, and a canoe was kindly lent me for two or three months, till an opportunity presented itself of purchasing one.

"A school was soon after commenced with two or three black and coloured children living in the neighbourhood, whom it was difficult at first to manage, their parents being accustomed to use the lash unsparingly, and other severe punishments, hardening to the children and painful to witness. One girl had her hand blistered for a trifling theft. Her mother had roasted a lime (a small kind of lemon), and forced her to grasp it in her hands, which she held tightly compressed within her own, till the palms were severely burnt. On another occasion I found on the opposite bank of the river three women chastising a girl. They had stripped her, and two held her extended by the hands and feet while the third flogged her with a long switch. In remitting, at my entreaty, further punishment

they always said, 'Ah, sir, you do not yet know! If young creoles are not well flogged, they never do good.'" *

Little by little some Waraus employed in cutting the leaves of the trooly palm began to converse with the missionary, who at that time knew hardly any Indian words, though he was assisted by Jeannette's boy.

One Sunday a coloured wood-cutter brought five Waraus of his gang to attend Divine service. To give them a more decent appearance, he had dressed them all in red woollen shirts. To these they had added, from the suggestions of their native taste, very tall sharp-pointed caps, a natural production, the spathe of the trooly palm. Their appearance, as they entered the humble place of worship in Indian file, with those extraordinary caps and long scarlet shirts, was strangely comical. They seemed at first painfully conscious of unusual finery, and nervously apprehensive of the supernatural consequences of attending Christian worship. But those feelings were lost in mirth when one of them, in trying to kneel, involuntarily squatted on his heels (as an Indian at first invariably does), lost his balance, and nearly overturned his companions. Loud exclamations of delight and a burst of Warau merriment followed. Their behaviour after this was so irreverent that it was a relief when they went out. Such incidents, though painfully annoying, must be expected at first among barbarous and heathen people.

As every attempt of Mr. Brett to win over the Waraus proved ineffectual, he turned his attention to the Arawaks, in whose country he lived. He found it very difficult at first to persuade them to come to his place; he used therefore to keep watch for any passing "Corial," or boat, and literally chase them, till they began to avoid the place

* "The Indian Tribes of Guiana," p. 70.

SCHOOL HOUSE, POMEROON.

entirely, which was very disheartening to him. He could not purchase fresh meat, and he had to depend for his food on fishing. The hooks used for the purpose were as a rule made out of common pins. To the fact of his being deprived of fresh meat and other comforts at this time we attribute the ill-health of the remainder of his days.

But why, it may be asked, did the Indians shun Mr. Brett? The answer we give in his own words.

"The chief cause of their unwillingness arose from the fact, which I afterwards discovered, that their "semicici" or sorcerers, foreseeing in the reception of Christianity the loss of their gains and influence, had forbidden the people to hold any intercourse with me. Sickness and death were denounced against any who should do so."

But the courage and indomitable faith of the missionary were not to be baulked. He had gone to preach the Gospel—what he wanted was a hearing. The Gospel of our dear Lord would accomplish the rest. The Indians saw a European, simple in his habits, apart from all congenial society, living in their midst, and almost as one of themselves, ready to impart some knowledge of the God of the pale faces; at last it pleased God to move the heart of one man to come forward. Mr. Brett thus relates the incident:—

"One day, about noon, I was surprised by a visit from an Arawak, who was accompanied by his son, a boy of about five years of age, and was still more surprised when, after a friendly salutation on his part, he asked me if I would instruct his child. I had never seen the man before, and had become so accustomed to indifference and rejection, that I could hardly believe him serious in his request. He was, however, perfectly in earnest, and said that he had just returned to his 'place' after a long absence, and had now

come to see me as soon as he heard of my arrival among his people. He was not well acquainted with English, but we managed to understand each other's meaning, helping out the words by signs and gestures; and an hour or two passed away more pleasantly than any I had experienced for a long time. He had been to the mouth of the Essequibo, and had seen what was doing there.

"He seemed to have his eyes opened to the state of the Indians, as living 'without God in the world,' and expressed disgust at the superstition of his countrymen in serving devils. Some time afterwards I found out that he had been himself a sorcerer, but, forsaking the practice, had broken his magical gourd, and cast away the fragments, when placing himself under instruction.

"He had been a great traveller for one of his tribe, having been a long way up the Essequibo, and he was also well acquainted with the lower part of the Orinoco. Though not then a recognised chief, he was the principal man at his settlement, and possessed of extensive family influence among his people. He was small in stature, but had keen eyes, and his black hair was slightly curled; from this he had derived his Indian name, which he told me was 'Sacibarra'* (*good or beautiful hair*).

"I found that he fully believed in the existence and goodness of God, and desired to serve Him, but he listened with surprise and wonder to the account I gave him of the life and work of the Redeemer. He was, however, firmly convinced of the impossibility of knowing the way to 'Ifilici Wa'cinaci,' the '*Great Our Father*,' without revelation from God Himself, and promised to come every Saturday, and stay till Monday morning, that he might see his child, and himself receive instruction.

* In Arawak the termination *ci* is pronounced as *che* in "cheer."

"I would willingly have kept the boy with me, but he said he was not prepared as yet to leave him, and seemed hurt at the distrust implied. He said that *his words* were *true*, and I had, a day or two after, proof that they were so, by his bringing not only the boy, but his eldest daughter, a girl eight years of age, whom he placed with me, assuring me that all his children should be brought as soon as they were old enough.

"After some further conversation he returned to his canoe, went home, and induced his wife to come with him on the following Sunday; and the next week a company, consisting of the four sisters of his wife, with the husbands of three of them, two other persons, and the children of all, filled my little hut. Two of the party left their children with me.

"Saci-barra, or Cornelius (by which name he was baptized in the course of the next year), was regular in supplying his children with food, as were also the others. They frequently brought me presents of game after a successful hunt, in token of gratitude.

"Such was the commencement of the work in the Pomeroon. A single Indian, whom I had never seen, was induced, by his secret convictions, to come forward in defiance of the sorcerers of his tribe, and break, by his example, the spell which seemed to have been cast over his countrymen." *

Cornelius became the missionary's right hand. He induced several of his kindred and tribe to come to Mr. Brett, and in a very short time there was an average of thirty Arawak children at the school. The children, of course, attracted the parents to the spot, and the place, which had been so dreary and dull, became very cheerful. A chapel was, with some help from English Churchmen,

* "Indian Tribes of Guiana," p. 85.

erected, and every Sunday very fair congregations assembled. Mr. Brett induced the people to come to the mission on Saturdays and return to their homes on Mondays. It may be said that time with the Indians is no object. True, but yet we Christians, who give so little of our time to God, might well learn a lesson from those Indians. It is also to be noted that Mr. Brett had no means to feed the Indians; they themselves brought their own provisions, and those who had children at the school invariably brought a good supply of victuals to serve them for a week. If during the week there had been a prosperous hunt, Mr. Brett was not forgotten.

The question naturally suggests itself as to what was the religion of the Indians. The following chapter will explain it.

CHAPTER IV.

The religion of the Indians—Animism—Legends—God—The Creation—The Fall—The destruction of the world by (1) *fire, and* (2) *by flood—Evil spirits—Vendetta or Kenaima—The Piaiman.*

No nation in the world has ever been found without some religion—a belief in a higher power, as well as a belief in a future world. A recent writer, who has lived among the Indians for about eight years, believes that the religion of the Indians of British Guiana is *animism* pure and simple, *i.e.*, "a belief in the existence of spirits as distinct, not necessarily as separate, from bodies." But we are here chiefly concerned with that which Mr. Brett learned of the religion of the Indians from their own mouths.

That the natives of Guiana had an idea of God as the Creator and Preserver of the world the following legend will show; and here we may remark that "The Legends and Myths of Guiana" are very interesting reading.

We are of opinion that had these "Legends" appeared in a prosaic garb, they would have been more acceptable to the student and scholar. Mr. Brett, on the other hand, thought that they would have lost a great deal of grace and power if they had been written in prose. We shall give them as they are. The first legend Mr. Brett learnt from the Arawak Indians, and is entitled:—

OF THE SUPREME BEING.

There is a mighty One above, and like Him there is none!
He sits on high, above the sky, where none can see His throne.
He was there ere He made the world, with stars, and moon, and sun;
And evermore He will be there, when each its course has run.

Our tongue gives Him no proper name, but titles more than one!
We call Him "Dweller in the Height," since there He sits alone,
The "Great Our Father," though to Him for comfort none have gone,
And of "Our Maker" oft we speak, but *never call upon.*

That Mighty Maker all things formed; 'tis He that made them move:
And food for all things He bestows, which seems a proof of love.
But calm He sits above the sky,
To Him for succour none can fly,
He is *so high above!*

The history of the Creation is thus told—

ORIGIN OF LIVING CREATURES.

(*Legend of the Ceiba Tree.*)

Here, beneath this sacred tree,
Old men told how moon and sun,
Earth and sky, and wide-spread sea,
Lay before the Mighty One.
High He stood where rivers run,
Pausing ere his work was done!

Waves, soft murmur'ring, beat the strand,
Gentle breezes sighed above;
Still no life was in the land,
No sweet birds sang songs of love.
O'er the plain and through the grove,
Nothing then was seen to move.

Then his seat, "Komaka," there,
  Wondrous tree!—He caused to grow;
'Midst the clouds its branches were,
  Earth and sea lay far below.
Sacred trees we this day know;
None such vast dimensions show.

From the bright green throne, His hand
  Scattered twigs and bark around,
Some in air, and some on land;
  Some the sparkling waters found.
Soon He saw with life abound,
Water, air, and solid ground!

Those which fell upon the stream
  Found a pleasant shelter there;
Shining fishes dart and gleam
  Where those woody fragments were!
Others sported through the air,
Bright with wings and feathers fair.

Moving, too, on solid ground,
  Or the river's marshy strand,
Beasts and reptiles then were found,
  Spreading thence to fill the land.
Men and women upright stand,
Raised by their great Maker's hand.

Wild fruits were first human food;
  Water man's sole drink, they say.
No bold hunters roamed the wood;
  None would then take life away;
Beasts and birds would sport and play
With young children day by day.

On this earth our sire then came
  (Young and brave "Wadili" he),
Saw their maidens, felt love's flame,
  Took them, fair, his wives to be;
Taught the native arts you see:
Hunting, fishing, husbandry.

The legend that follows gives an account of the first man.

PRIMITIVE STATE.

First, my Acawoi narrator
Told how beasts and birds were made;
How the Mighty, their Creator,
Gave them laws to be obeyed.
Made them of *one speech* to be,
Bade them live in unity.

That there might be no oppression,
Man was made, and placed o'er all.
The first man, of wise discretion,
"Makonaima's son" we call.
Just, as well as kind, was he!
All obeyed him lovingly.

Ere the sun's bright rays were burning,
All dispersed in forests near;
With the cool of day returning,
Glad his loving call to hear.
Each one of his food would bring,
Homage paid to man—their king.

No great trouble or disaster
Could oppress them or annoy;
For the man, their gentle master,
In their good placed all his joy.
Surely, we no more shall see
In this world such unity.

. . . . .

Then, 'tis said, great Makonaima,
Made for them a wondrous tree,
Capp'd with clouds, like high Roraima
Bearing fruits abundantly—
Every kind—the meed to be
Of their love and loyalty!

In all ancient religions we find a legend of the Flood; but the peculiarity of this legend is that it represents the

earth as first destroyed by *fire*. One family, however, was saved by the wisdom of a chief.

"Here," said he, "a pit preparing,
Wives and children hide,
Timber strong, the sand-reef bearing,
We must first provide.
Piles will keep that shelter o'er us;
Comrades, work!—the vault before us
Must be deep and wide.

"Felling next the trees, and burning,
All around make clear;
Shrubs and grass to ashes turning,
Leave we nothing here—
Nothing on which flames can fasten.
Clear and burn! O brothers; hasten,
Ere the flames appear!"

. . . . .

Clouds of smoke, the sun concealing,
Come, still rolling nigher!
Then fierce flames, their might revealing,
Wrap the woods in fire.
Onward comes the blazing torrent;
That burnt "clearing" stays its current:
There—the flames expire.

After the fire presumably the earth was repeopled by this family. Soon after a rumour was heard that the Great Spirit was about once more to destroy the world in consequence of the wickedness in it, this time the destroying element was water. One man, Marerewana by name, was commanded to make a large boat to save himself and family.

As in the Bible story, we are told that

Some among his nearest neighbours
Said he was to blame;
Others, mocking at his labours,
Strove to give him shame.

Still they found him at it working,
Morn and eve, no labour shirking,
Ere "great waters" came.

"Make it large, Marerewana!
Strong and fair to view:
Over forest and savannah
Float—the deluge through!"
Thus they mocked their anxious neighbour,
Mocked him at his heavy labour,—
Laughed at his canoe!

Archèd roof he thatched above it,
Palm leaves strong and warm;
Firm, that no fierce wind might move it,
Ready for the storm.
"Here," said he, "my loved ones, hiding,
Through the tempest safe abiding,
May be kept from harm."

Still he feared, and said with sorrow,
"When this flood shall come,
We may drift (perhaps to-morrow),
Through the salt-sea foam!"
Said a voice, "That great tree near thee,
Moor to *that*—thy craft shall bear thee
Safely near thy home!"

They made use of bush ropes to fasten the vessel, and thus they were saved.

The Indians also possess an idea of a future state. There is for them the happy hunting-fields of sky-land—for this they hope—but whether there is a place for wicked men is not stated. Do they believe in the Devil? This question may be answered thus. They believe that in this world there are places inhabited by malignant spirits, that these spirits take a delight in causing trouble, mischief, and death, and that they are not merely the spirits of human beings. For they consider inanimate objects as also possessing what we

must call, for the want of a better term, bodies and spirits. Thus certain rocks and trees are avoided; and we are told by Mr. Brett that when on one occasion a fearful epidemic attacked the Indians in his missions, they fled far away from the settlements into the interior, but in so doing *they cut large trees to serve as obstructions to the course of the evil spirit that had brought the sickness!*

The religious notions held by the Guiana Indians appear such as to justify the belief that a missionary would have but little difficulty in building up Christianity on their primitive system.

We now proceed to explain the *vendetta* of the Indians. It goes by the name of Kanaima. Of this fearful rite—for we cannot call it by the ghostly name of murder, the Kanaima being part of the religion of the Indians—Mr. Brett says: *—

"A person dies, and it is supposed that an enemy has secured the agency of an evil spirit to compass his death. Some sorcerer, employed by the friends of the deceased for that purpose, pretends by his incantations to discover the guilty individual or family, or at any rate to indicate the quarter where they dwell. A near relative of the deceased is then charged with the work of vengeance. He becomes a 'Kanaima,' or is supposed to be possessed by the destroying spirit so called, and has to live apart, according to strict rule, and submit to many privations, until the deed of blood is accomplished. If the supposed offender cannot be slain, some innocent member of his family—man, woman, or little child—must suffer instead. If the victim cannot be approached with safety to the assassin, he may be shot from behind, and buried by the

* "The Indian Tribes of Guiana," p. 357. *Vide* also "Among the Indians of Guiana," ch. xvi.

Kanaima near the spot where he falls. But such vengeance, though allowed, is considered imperfect, the manes of the deceased being supposed to demand more cruelty in the sacrifice. So the victim, where it can be done, is approached softly from behind while off his guard, and struck down by a violent blow across the neck. While he lies insensible (according to some accounts) his throat is grasped, and the fangs of a poisonous serpent are thrust through his tongue. Others say that a poisonous serpent-powder (prepared in the far interior from the strongest kind of a plant called Urupa, and which the Kanaima carries in the wing-bone of a powis, concealed in his hair) is forced into the mouth. Horrible agony and inability to speak, followed in due course by death, are the inevitable result.

"The work of the Kanaima is not yet ended. If the sufferer be found by his friends and carried home, the perpetrator of the deed is obliged to hover near, to discover the place of burial, as he cannot be released from the power of the evil spirit which possesses him until he has performed certain acts to the victim's body. What those acts are it is difficult to learn. Some of the Indians say that the corpse must be disinterred for the purpose, but the statement given by the Rev. Mr. Bernau in his excellent account derived from the Essequibo Indians, seems to me more probable. He says that the murderer goes to the grave on the third night and presses a pointed stick through the body, that he may taste the victim's blood.

"If this, which is an offering to the Kanaima spirit within him, be accomplished, he becomes like other men, and can return to his family; but if not, he wanders on till madness or some other dire consequence, by the agency of the disappointed spirit, is believed to come upon him.

"The family of his victim are, of course, desirous that

the corpse should not be desecrated, and that the murderer should suffer. To ensure the former, they endeavour to bury the body in some place where the Kanaima may not find it. This is difficult, for where one Indian goes another can track him. So to make certain of revenge, if the grave be molested, some one will open the body, take out the liver, and put a red-hot axe-head into its place. If, after that be done, the Kanaima disturb the corpse, the intense heat which was in the axe-head when placed there will pass into his body, consume his vitals, and cause him to perish miserably. Such is their belief.

"An Acawoio told me also of another plan that is sometimes followed. A small quantity of the ourali (or worali) poison placed on the dead body will equally ensure the death of the murderer. Should he return to desecrate the remains, the venom of the ourali will pass into and destroy him.

"In consequence of these practices and the terror they inspire, the Indians of the interior seldom consider themselves in perfect safety. Those near the coast will, if unfortunately entangled in a quarrel, apply to some influential person, whose agency is generally successful. When a murder of the above kind is committed near the coast, the Kanaima and victim are generally both from the interior.

"In cases of secret enmity poison is sometimes resorted to. The Indians are acquainted with various preparations, both vegetable and animal, which may be used secretly to remove an obnoxious person, or to avenge a real or supposed injury.

"Venomous serpents, as may be supposed, are used in the composition of some of these poisons. A preparation, for instance, from a certain part of the inside of the deadly bush-master snake, mixed with a little of the juice of the

bitter cassava (which is itself poisonous), and given in a draught of paiwari, is said to cause death quickly, and if smoked with tobacco to be more slow, but equally fatal, causing the throat to swell for days till death ensues."

We have already stated that the cause why Mr. Brett met with almost insuperable difficulties was the *Piaiman*. This word signifies sorcerer. The Piaimen "are each furnished with a *large gourd* or calabash, which has been emptied of its spongy contents, and has a round stick run through the middle of it by means of two holes. The ends of this stick project—one forms the handle of the instrument, and the other has a long string, to which beautiful feathers are attached, wound round it in spiral circles. Within the calabash are a few small white stones, which rattle when it is shaken or turned round. The calabash itself is usually painted red. It is regarded with great awe by the heathen Indians, who fear to touch it, or even to approach the place where it is kept.

"When attacked by sickness, the Indians cause themselves to be conveyed to some friendly sorcerer, to whom a present of more or less value must be made. Death is sometimes occasioned by those removals, cold being taken from wet or the damp of the river. If the patient cannot be removed, the sorcerer is sent for to visit him. The females are all sent away from the place, and the men must keep at a respectful distance, as he does not like his proceedings to be closely inspected. He then commences his exorcisms, turning and shaking his marakka or rattle, and chanting an address to the yauhahu or evil spirit. This is continued for hours, until about midnight the spirit is supposed to be present, and a conversation to take place, which is unintelligible to the Indians who may overhear it. These ceremonies are kept up for successive nights.

"If the patient be strong enough to endure the disease, the excitement, the noise, and the fumes of tobacco in which he is at times enveloped, and the sorcerer observe signs of recovery, he will pretend to extract the cause of the complaint by sucking the part affected. After many ceremonies he will produce from his mouth some strange substance, such as a thorn or gravel-stone, a fish-bone, or bird's claw, a snake's tooth, or a piece of wire, which some malicious yauhahu is supposed to have inserted in the affected part. As soon as the patient fancies himself rid of this cause of his illness, his recovery is generally rapid, and the fame of the sorcerer greatly increased. Should death, however, ensue, the blame is laid upon the evil spirit, whose power and malignity have prevailed over the counteracting charms. Some rival sorcerer will at times come in for a share of the blame, whom the sufferer has unhappily made his enemy, and who is supposed to have employed the yauhahu in destroying him. The sorcerers being supposed to have the power of causing, as well as of curing disease, are much dreaded by the common people, who never wilfully offend them. So deeply rooted in the Indians' bosom is this belief concerning the origin of diseases, that they have little idea of sickness arising from other causes. Death may arise from a wound or a contusion, or be brought on by want of food, but in other cases it is the work of the yauhahu.

"I once came upon a Warau practising his art upon a woman afflicted with a severe internal complaint. He was, when I first saw him, blowing violently into his hands and rubbing them upon the affected part. He very candidly acknowledged his imposture when I taxed him with it, put up his implements, and went away. The fate of the poor woman, as it was related to me some time afterwards, was very sad. Though a Venezuelan half-breed, and of the

Church of Rome, she was wedded to the Indian superstitions, and after trying the most noted sorcerers without relief, she inflicted on herself a mortal wound with a razor in the vain attempt to cut out the imaginary cause of her internal pain!

"Some have imagined that those men have faith in the power of their own incantations from their performing them over their own children, and even causing them to be acted over themselves when sick. This practice is indeed difficult to account for. The juggling part of their business is such a gross imposture as could only succeed with a very ignorant and credulous people; but it is perhaps in their case, as in some others, difficult to tell the precise point where credulity ends and imposture begins. It is certain that they are excited during their incantations in a most extraordinary way, and positively affirm that they hold intercourse with spirits; nor will they allow themselves to be laughed out of the assertion, however ridiculous it may appear to us.

"The Waraus, in many points the most degraded of the tribes, are the most renowned as sorcerers. The huts which they set apart for the performance of their superstitious rites are regarded with great veneration.

"A missionary once visited a Warau settlement, entered one of those huts, not being aware of the offence he was committing, and found it perfectly empty, with the exception of the gourd, or 'mataro,' as it is called by that tribe. There was in the centre of the hut a small raised place about eighteen inches high, on which the fire had been made for burning tobacco. The sorcerer being asked to give up the gourd, peremptorily refused, saying that if he did so his 'two children would die the same night.'

"Those men are generally called upon to confer Indian names on the children of their tribe. Each of those names

has its meaning. A few may be mentioned as showing the taste of the Arawaks in this particular. Some are derived from personal appearance, the hair especially being noticed; as 'Ka-barra-li,' *having hair;* 'Ma-barra-si-li,' *head without hair;* 'Ka-korri-'si-li,' *curly hair, &c.* One boy whom I knew was called by a name signifying *soft head.* Some derive their names from birds and other animals, as 'Koiali,' *the red and blue macaw.* Others are named after the tobacco, their favourite plant, as 'Yuri,' *tobacco;* 'Yuri-banna,' *tobacco-leaf;* 'Yuri-tokoro,' *tobacco-flower*, the latter name being often given to a handsome child of either sex. Others again are named from some quality or title, as 'Ifili,' *the great;* 'Adaiahu,' *the governor, &c.* A present is given to the sorcerer who names the child." *

The Piaimen were the greatest obstacles to the spread of Christianity. Imagine an Indian forbidden by his Piaiman (for the Piaimen *were* numerous, each large settlement possessing at least one) daring to visit the missionary! The Indians dread their Piaimen as children do thunder. Then again the Piaimen and his people respect their religion as we do ours. It is easy *for us* to see the faults of the religions of uncivilised men, but they themselves see them not. They are satisfied with that which gave satisfaction to their forefathers. Would we go readily to listen to a man who would decry our religion? But the Piaimen had also other powerful reasons. If the missionary were to succeed, their gain would be gone and their class would be doomed. If we bear in mind this, we shall easily understand why the dauntless missionary was eschewed till he had almost given up all hope of making any impression upon the Indian tribes of Guiana.

* "The Indian Tribes of Guiana," ch. ix. *Vide* also Im Thurn's "Among the Indians of Guiana," ch. xvi.

"Though careless to the last degree, and averse to continuous employment, the Indians are much sought after as labourers. When they can be induced to begin, they will do more work than others, and are satisfied with less wages if rum be given liberally.

"They inhabit the swampy district so often mentioned, and being near the sea, are excellent fishermen, and subsist much upon the productions of the waters. They cultivate cassava and other vegetables, but do not pay sufficient attention to agriculture, and in times of scarcity betake themselves to the îta palms, which abound in the swamps. This tree is of the greatest service to them. They are fond of its fruit, and at certain seasons make of its pith a substitute for bread, while its trunk is sometimes split and used in flooring their dwellings, and its leaf supplies the fibrous material of which, among other useful things, they make strong and serviceable hammocks, which form an important article in their little traffic.

"They are also noted for making canoes, with which they supply the whole colony; the Arawâks sometimes undertaking long voyages to their remote settlements, and bringing the canoes, to be again sold to the settlers, or disposed of among themselves.

"The canoe, or 'woibaka,' as it is called by the Waraus, is most excellently adapted to the wants of the Indians, though shaped and hollowed with rude implements, and without any assistance from the rules of art. Some of those used by the Spaniards are said to have been known to carry one hundred men and a three-pounder; but the largest I have seen could not have carried more than fifty persons.

"Were the Waraus more careful of their gains, and more prompt to avail themselves of advantages, no tribe in Guiana could be in more respectable circumstances; but they have

not yet learned to make the slightest provision beyond what absolute necessity requires. If successful in hunting, a scene of excessive gluttony follows, until the game is consumed, and returning hunger forces them to exertion. If unsuccessful, they are capable of enduring great privation. they can also paddle a canoe with greater vigour and for a longer time than the other Indians.

"Such are the Waraus; strong and hardy in person, but slovenly and dirty; merry and cheerful in disposition, but careless and improvident.

"They were utterly ignorant, and consequently very superstitious, their sorcerers being considered to possess greater power over the evil spirits than those of any other tribe."

"After repeated efforts during two years among the Waraus of Manawarin, finding no change in their disposition, I resolved to try another field of labour, and began to visit a small river in the vicinity, called Haimara-Cabura. Little satisfaction attended the first visit, as the people at the settlement where we took up our quarters were at no pains to conceal their indifference or dislike. A fine young fellow had a kind of javelin, the shaft of which was made of a strong reed, in one end of which was inserted a piece of hard wood, forming the point. He continued to hurl this at a mark on the soft stem of a plantain-tree, which was pierced through; the pointed wood remaining firmly fixed in the tree while the elastic staff flew back towards the man who had cast it. He told me that it was used in striking the morocote and other large fish: fruit or seeds which they are fond of being scattered on the still water, while the Indian watches their rising and kills them with an arrow or this kind of dart.

"These people paid little or no attention to our evening worship, did not wish to be taught, and seemed

thoroughly ill-tempered. After we had retired to rest, a child happening to cry, one of the women arose from her hammock, and taking a large piece of firewood, struck it violently several times as it lay, and then suddenly caught it up, ran to the bush, and hurled it from her. It fell on the ground, apparently much hurt. I had not witnessed such brutality among the other tribes, but concluded that they were all out of temper because I had brought no rum to give them, for which they were very importunate. The next morning they demanded money for the shelter they had afforded myself and party, a thing I had never heard of among the Indians of Guiana.

"They were thoroughly wedded to their superstitions, and practised them without reserve. On one occasion we passed an old man fishing in a canoe on the Manawarin. The clouds threatened rain, and when he perceived it, he began to use extraordinary gesticulations, flourishing his arms and shouted his incantations to drive it away. It soon cleared up, and the old sorcerer rejoiced at his success, as he deemed it.

"In the course of another voyage, we passed a Warau similarly engaged in fishing, and apparently so intent upon his pursuit that he could neither observe us passing nor answer our salutation. When we had got a little distance from him, he inquired of the Arawak who was steering our canoe whether I had many of the 'hebo,' or evil spirits, attending me. The answer, 'They are entirely wanting,' was accompanied by a loud laugh from my crew. It appeared that the Waraus, in their ignorance, regarded a missionary as a powerful enchanter, and attributed the change in the other tribes to the effect of magic.

"These discouragements continued up to the close of 1844. But at that time, and while their case appeared to

me as utterly hopeless, some of these people commenced attending the station on the Lower Pomeroon. An account of this was speedily sent to me by Mr. Campbell, who had succeeded Mr. Smithett as teacher there, and it seemed expedient to visit them without delay. Accordingly, I set out on the 15th of December for Haimara-Cabura. The weather was tempestuous, the rainy season having set in with violence, and we took this route to avoid the necessity of crossing the sea, as there is a passage called the Itabbo leading to the Manawarin through the forests, which is only navigable when the whole country is inundated. On the morning of the 18th we set out from the settlement in the Koraia, across the savannah, then covered with water. The reeds and grass appearing above the surface caused it to resemble at a little distance a pleasant lawn; while the islets and the mainland were finely wooded, and an ita-tree here and there stood in solitary beauty in the midst of the savannah, A double rainbow appeared as we started, whose bright colours contrasted vividly with the dark clouds as it spanned our intended course. We proceeded through the Itabbo, meeting with much difficulty, owing to the fallen trees which obstructed the channel. I had formerly travelled that way with Mr. Smithett, but the impediments had much increased in number since that time."

CHAPTER V.

Resignation of Bishop Coleridge—Archdeacon Austin made Bishop of Guiana —Ordination of Brett—Cabacaburi—The Waraus—Another Field of Labour—Mr. M'Clintock—Mr. J. H. Nowers.

In 1842 Bishop Coleridge resigned, after eighteen years' hard work as a pioneer bishop in the West Indies, and then Guiana was made into a separate diocese, and with Archdeacon Austin as its first bishop, consecrated on the Feast of St. Bartholomew in 1842 at Westminster Abbey, by Bishops Blomfield of London, Sumner of Winchester, Murray of Rochester, Gilbert of Chichester, and Coleridge, late of Barbadoes. Shortly after his consecration the Bishop of Guiana returned to the newly constituted diocese. The Bishop at his first ordination, which was held on the Feast of St. James, 1843, sent for Mr. Brett from his distant mission for examination, which proved satisfactory, and he was ordained a deacon. On the same day the following year he was admitted into the ranks of the priesthood. Thus fully equipped for the battle against the powers of darkness, he went back, not to the Arapiaco, but to a hill on the river Pomeroon called Cabacaburi, a site which had been purchased by the Bishop for mission purposes. The writer has visited this hill, as well as every mission in this district, travelling in which has now, of course, been greatly improved. Cabacaburi is reached *via* the sugar-plantation Anna Regina (the property of Sir Thomas Edwards-Moss,

of Otterspool, Liverpool, a munificent Churchman), through its main or "navigation" canal. Two hours pulling takes us to Lake Tapacooma, at the other end of which a "portage" is reached, where the "corials" are unloaded and hauled over, and the "Tapacooma" creek is reached. After this comes the Arapiaco and the spot where the mission was first established—now covered by an exuberant growth of bush and trees interlaced by creepers and "bush ropes"—is still pointed out. After this the fine river Pomeroon is reached. The hill on which the mission is situated has at its top a magnificent silk cotton tree—a king of the forest—by the side of which the tall palms look mere pigmies, its height being about 180 feet.

The Arapiaco station was not left without a pang. Mr. Brett thus writes :—

"It was not without a feeling of regret that the old settlement could be quitted; for though unhealthy, it has been endeared by many associations. But for health and comfort the new place of residence was much superior. It soon became a pleasant and picturesque spot. A large village here sprang up, the Caribs erecting one half, and the Arawaks the other. Among the houses were large clumps of tall and feather-like bamboos; while the cocoanut and paripi palms, the bread-nut, mango, orange, lime, guava, and other trees, 'pleasant to the sight or good for food,' added to the beauty of the settlement by their varied shapes and foliage.

"The Caribs of the vicinity had joined us, but those who dwelt near the head of the Pomeroon still held aloof. The majority of them knew very little English, and were influenced by one of their number who could speak it very well, but acted in opposition to us. I visited this person, and found him an intelligent man, though living in the

barbarous fashion of his heathen countrymen. He was very civil in his language, but took no pains to conceal his aversion to Christianity. Rising from his stool, he cut short our interview by asking me to go with him and see a fine 'king of the vultures' which he had captured.

"It was a splendid bird, and of large size. Its head, destitute of feathers, but shaded with delicate tints of pink and orange, and set off with brilliant pearl-coloured eyes, seemed, with the ruff round its neck and other plumage, to call forth the admiration of my Carib host. But we were both obliged to keep to windward, on account of the odour of a number of putrifying fish given it for food, over which, though they were not yet in a sufficiently advanced stage of decomposition, the feathered epicure was beginning to spread and flap his wings, anticipating the future banquet.

"The object of my visits to this district was totally defeated for the time by the influence of this man and others of the Carib leaders.

"The state of the Waraus in the remoter districts then became a subject of reflection and solicitude. They had always ranked lowest among the coast tribes of Guiana, and not one hopeful sign had as yet appeared among them.

"In person the Waraus are short, stoutly built, and capable of great exertion, but they are generally very careless of their personal appearance, and their filthiness is proverbial. They care so little for clothing, that even their females frequently content themselves with a small piece of the bark of a tree, or the net-like covering of the young leaf of the cocoa-nut or cabbage-palm; and their appearance is squalid and disagreeable.

"Many of the young persons of this tribe possess very good features, which I have once or twice seen disfigured

THE BISHOP SALUTING INDIANS IN THE DEMERARA RIVER.

by a thin piece of silver, suspended from the cartilage of the nostrils, and covering the upper lip.

"As they so seldom cover their bodies, their skins are darker than those of the other tribes. It has been said that it is difficult at times to distinguish the Warau from the negro; but this is incorrect: from continual exposure and want of cleanliness their skins are somewhat darker than those of other Indians, but that is all.

"We arrived at the settlement in Haimara-Cabura, and the intelligence soon spread through the neighbourhood. The Waraus began to assemble. I was not sorry, for there were but two men at the place,—an old and a young one; the former very savage and crabbed in his manner. Endeavours to soothe him by praising the beauty of the skin of an ocelot, which he had made into a cap, and wore with the tail appended behind, were all in vain; he turned a deaf ear to everything spoken, whether pleasant or serious. The young fellow was also very annoying, and ridiculously insolent; for placing himself immediately in front, he continued to dance (*at* me, as it seemed) the ungraceful, staggering dance of his nation at intervals during the whole day.

"When their chief, named Damon, arrived, he told me that the old man was a great sorcerer, which explained his moroseness. When I began to speak to the people, he seemed much excited; and when he saw them arrange themselves for evening worship, probably thinking it a proof that the spirits who favoured the Christian religion were more powerful than his own familiars, he paid them the compliment of putting on a clean white shirt and joining us.

"The last party who came were heard about this time a long distance off shouting with all their might. I met them as they landed from their canoes, and told them that we were about to speak to the great God, our Maker and Lord,

whom they must approach with reverence. This had the desired effect, and those poor ignorant beings behaved with great reverence during the singing and prayers. I afterwards addressed them in broken English, of which many of them knew a little. They now appeared very anxious to be taught, and I was astonished at the change, and hoped that it might be the commencement of their ingathering to the Church of God.

"When night came on, the people whose habitations were near departed; the others tied up their hammocks wherever they could find a place. There was much laughter over their fires, and more talking; but all agreed to follow me on my return to Caledonia, and to continue to attend there until a teacher could be placed among them. They fulfilled their promise, and on the Lord's day the place of worship was crowded with Indians, Arawaks, Waraus, and Caribs, while people from every neighbouring creek, some even from Moruca, came without having been invited.

"This sudden change in the disposition of the Waraus drew the attention of the Postholder, Mr. M'Clintock, who had always used his influence in inducing the Indians to receive Christian instruction. They were now become too numerous to be accommodated at Caledonia, where the mosquitoes were also painfully annoying, depriving them of sleep. The sea, which they had to cross, had sometimes swamped the Caribi canoes, which were very small, and only adapted for smooth water and the heads of the rivers. On those occasions both men and women jumped into the sea, and hung by the canoe with one hand till the water could be baled out. Notwithstanding, they complained that they had sometimes lost their hammocks, and got their bread spoiled by the sea-water. A new station thus became necessary. Mr. M'Clintock informed me of the

existence of a fine hill or elevated sand-reef on the banks of the Moruca, near the mouth of Haimara-Cabura; and he took advantage of the disposition of the Waraus to assemble a great number of them, who began to cut down the forest to form a mission-station among themselves.

"While he was thus engaged, I went to Georgetown, and brought the matter before the Demerara and Essequibo branch of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel. The application was immediately received, and a sum of money voted to commence with; but there was no missionary whose services were available. When this was made apparent, and the question, 'Whom shall we send?' proposed by Archdeacon Lugar, Mr. J. H. Nowers, who was present, rose up, offered himself for the work, and was immediately appointed to the mission.

"On my return, I found some hundreds of Indians assembled at the site of the proposed mission-station. They had already cleared a large tract of sand-reef under the superintendence of the Postholder, who had erected a shed for his accommodation, over which a large flag was waving in the breeze.

"Some of the Waraus present had come from very remote quarters. They were headed by an old chief named Clementia, who drew them up in order, forming three sides of a square, to hear what I had to say. The old chief bore his silver-headed staff in his hand, and had on a once fashionable black coat, with long swallow tails and very high collar, but no other garment, except his scanty Indian cloth. His people were even wilder and more grotesque than himself. The message with which I was charged was explained to the Waraus by Stoll, Mr. M'Clintock's interpreter, and great was their joy to hear that a resident missionary was about to be placed among them.

"The work then proceeded with great rapidity. In every direction were heard the crash of falling trees and the shouts of the Waraus. The posts and timber for the erection of the chapel and mission-house were soon cut, and a settler employed to erect the latter.

"None of the Indians received wages. They provided their own cassava bread, and a few casks of salt fish furnished them with rations. A puncheon of molasses was also sent for their use by Mr. Hughes, manager of plantation Anna Regina, who had heard of their exertions. Sixty men went to that estate, after the clearing was over, to work for clothing.

"How different were the prospects in March 1845, as regarded the spread of the Gospel of Christ among them, to those presented six months before! Those events were surprising at the time to those who witnessed them. To myself especially, who during many fruitless expeditions had seen so many proofs of their unwillingness, the present change seemed the work of God. Nor was this feeling lessened at beholding the manner in which the altered disposition of the Waraus was met by the exertions of the Postholder, and the appointment of a missionary, between whom and myself there existed the bond of former friendship, and a recent family tie.

"Of the promising appearance of all the Indian Missions in the colony, the Hon. H. C. F. Young, then Government Secretary, publicly stated that it might (at that time) have been said, 'almost without a figure of speech:'—'The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them, and the desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose.'"

CHAPTER VI.

WARAMURI.

Mr. Smithett—Mr. Nowers—Waramuri—Erection of mission-buildings—Sickness of missionaries—Extraordinary imposture—Long drought—Waramuri nearly destroyed by fire—Famine—Mortality by dysentery—Progress of the mission—Distant Indians desire a teacher—Abandonment of Waramuri—Various trials—Panic among Caribs—Abandonment of mission.

In 1842 Mr. Brett writes in the journal already alluded to that he had "visited every accessible Indian settlement on the River Pomeroon and its tributaries." In the same year Mr. W. T. Smithett was sent by the Bishop to help Mr. Brett in the work which he was carrying on among 300 small farmers, chiefly of African origin, who had settled a tide or so below Cabacaburi. Mr. Brett wished now to reach the Indians on the other neighbouring rivers. As far as we can learn, it would appear that he would have liked to have started a mission near the mouth of the Pomeroon; but the plan could not be carried out, for in that neighbourhood the mosquitoes are so numerous and irritating that no Indian could be persuaded to settle there. The black people, however, managed to live during the night by enclosing their hammocks within curtains, and by filling their houses with smoke. Mr. Smithett remained only for one year. In the meantime Mr. Brett had visited the Indian settlements on the Manawarin, the Wakapoa, and the Haimara-Cabura.

We shall now have to deal with the station that was finally established on the Moruca. This station is about sixty miles from Cabacaburi. Part of the journey is somewhat perilous, as an estuary or bay of the Atlantic, which extends between the rivers Pomeroon and Moruca, has to be crossed. This new station was the outcome of the visits paid by Mr. Brett during this period. The people evinced a great yearning for instruction. The Postholder or protector of the Indians, Mr. W. C. H. F. M'Clintock, exerted himself in having the hill fixed upon for the mission cleared of bush and made habitable. About this time Mr. Nowers, Mr. Brett's brother-in-law, volunteered his services, and was placed in charge of the infant mission.

Mr. Brett thus describes the new mission :—"A ridge of sand gradually ascends from the mouth of the Haimara-Cabura to a considerable height, and terminates abruptly in a tumulus resembling an ancient barrow. One side of this mound is precipitous, the other connected with the sand-reef. It seemed chiefly composed of small shells, resembling those of periwinkles, and marked with alternate stripes of white and black. These were so abundant that the mould when taken up in a shovel appeared full of them. Between this hill and the Moruca there is a swamp about a quarter of a mile in width. Both the swamp and the high land were then completely covered with the newly felled trees. From the top of the hill we could look down upon the forest, and trace the course of the Moruca and two tributary streams; the trees on their banks being higher than those in the other parts of the forest.

"When Mr. Nowers arrived, his exertions were so well seconded by the Indians, that the erection of the buildings advanced rapidly. They were built of rough timber, and thatched with trooly leaves. As the Moruca and its

tributary streams are destitute of this tree, every leaf had to be fetched from the Pomeroon in their small canoes, each trip occupying at least three days. The labour thus bestowed was only remunerated by a small allowance of salt fish and molasses. As no sailing-vessel can enter the Moruca, the boards for the buildings were brought by the Indians in the same manner from its mouth, a few at a time. The Waraus and Manawarin Caribs did most of this laborious work; the Arawaks in the vicinity of the mission thatched the sides and roofs of the buildings, and the carpenter's work was performed by settlers from the Pomeroon. The sum granted by the Demerara and Essequibo District Society was about £170 sterling, and the labour of the Indians would have cost an equal sum had it been necessary to pay them.

"As soon as the house was habitable, Mr. Nowers brought his family to the mission. An accident happened while they were passing up the Moruca which might have been attended with fatal consequences. The mouth of this stream forms a rapid during the rainy season, from its extreme narrowness and the immense quantity of water which there finds its outlet. Wild mangroves overhang it, whose roots and branches, somewhat resembling those of the banian-tree in the East, descend into the water. While the crew of the large canoe which contained the family were vainly striving to overcome the opposing current, two Indian boys from the Pomeroon Mission, who were in a small canoe loaded with plantains, got entangled among the mangroves; their frail craft turned broadside to the current, and was driven violently against a mass of spreading roots. One of them, an Arawak, was completely hoisted out by a branch, and hung suspended, clinging to it for some little time; then, without losing his presence of mind, he swung

himself several feet over the whirling and dashing water into the nearly-overturned canoe. It was a moment of great anxiety to us, as we were quite unable to approach them. But providentially the canoe was not swamped, though very small; the impeding roots and branches gave way, and they slipped through them, and shot down the stream with us to wait the moment of high water. They were neither of them twelve years old, and, though excellent swimmers, must have been carried under the roots of the trees and drowned had they fallen into the stream.

"A little after dark we reached Waramuri, and as the sound of the paddles was heard by the people on the hill, a great number of lights were seen advancing to meet us; and on landing, the hearty greeting of about one hundred Caribi men and women was almost overwhelming. All were pressing to shake hands, and to carry some little article from the canoe to the house. It was a grateful spectacle, and very cheering to the new-comers.

"I was soon after compelled to leave my station for a time by the effects of a severe fever; and Mr. Nowers had a very serious illness while visiting Georgetown for the purpose of being admitted into holy orders, his wife being dangerously ill at the same time.

"About this time a remarkable imposture was practised upon the Indians in that part of Guiana. A person pretending to be the Lord went into the interior with some followers, and established himself in the upper part of the Massaruni. From this distant spot he sent emissaries into the neighbourhood of all the missions, calling on the Indians to quit their homes and provision-grounds, and go to him. They were told that they should possess lands which would yield a large crop of cassava from a single stick, and various other absurdities, very alluring to the

WARAMURI HILL.

indolent Indian. These tales, joined to threats of horrible destruction which should come upon all who refused to go, had their influence upon the minds of many, and lured them away.

"The movement commenced with Acawoios near the Essequibo, who had been observed to be providing themselves with fire-arms for some time before they set out. They were anxious to get the Caribs to join them, and hundreds of Indians of different tribes went from all parts of the country to 'see God,' as they termed it, some of whom perished by sickness on the way, and others found themselves in a state of destitution on arriving on the spot.

"Intelligence of this singular movement was conveyed to the Bishop of Guiana, whose invalid guest I was at that time. Having learned the particulars, I hastened to the mission, though still very weak; and Mr. Nowers followed with his family as soon as he was able to travel. We found that not one baptized person, and only one catechumen, had been enticed away; but those who had kept aloof from Christian instruction had fallen readily into the deceitful snare.

"In the more remote districts some settlements were completely deserted. The inhabitants of others had been part of the way and then returned, famished and ashamed. In the upper part of the Pomeroon I found that the course of the river was obstructed by two trees of great height, which had been cut from the banks to afford their families the means of crossing in their hasty march. Still the number of Caribs who went was but small compared with that of the Acawoios, who left their settlements on the Barima and Barahma for a long time.

"Kobise, the Caribi catechumen, who had been deluded

away, soon returned to Waramuri, and thus detailed the particulars of his journey:—'We travelled as fast as we could for thirteen days, and at length arrived at a savannah where some hundreds of Acawoios and others were assembled. They had as yet scarcely any field-provisions, and game was scarce from the multitude of hunters. I was led to a little enclosed hut, from which I heard a voice commanding me to return and fetch my friends and neighbours, as a great fire and water would come upon the whole world except that spot.' He said also that the impostor did not make himself visible, but remained concealed from all, as far as he could learn, delivering his predictions by night; and that his voice sounded like that of a white person. He also added, that on looking around him, he could see nothing but drinking and dancing, a portion of the little cassava bread which they could obtain being made into paiwari; and from this he became apprehensive that it was a delusion of the Yurokon, or evil spirit, and made his escape from them the same night, and returned.

"This strange story, the leading facts of which have been well authenticated by other evidence, is a remarkable illustration of Matt. xxiv. 26 (a text which struck the Indians greatly when it was explained to them on that occasion), inasmuch as the impostor was both 'in a secret chamber' and in 'the desert.' It showed us the necessity of using every effort to spread among those simple people the knowledge which alone could make them truly wise. At the same time, it proved that the knowledge of the existence of a Saviour from destruction had even then spread very widely, although to many it was but as a faintly gleaming light, not sufficient to keep them from going into error.

"A long period of drought ensued. The rainy season, which is expected to commence in November, was confined to a few partial showers; and the earth was parched and vegetation dried up by the long period of heat, which lasted from August 1845 until the following May.

"During the height of that drought, Waramuri Mission was in danger of being destroyed by fire. The swamp in front of it has been already described. It was then covered with dry vegetation and the trees which had been cut down a year before. A Caribi Indian, named Plata, incautiously set fire to the dry grass, and the flames soon began to rise, and spread with rapidity, covering a space a quarter of a mile in extent, and advancing towards the mission. As soon as the alarm was given, Mr. Nowers and the Indians present ran to clear away the dried grass and brushwood which covered the slope, that the fire might have nothing to feed upon. It reached the foot of the hill, and as it began to climb in any place, it was beaten down with long poles. The heat was suffocating, and both the missionary and Indians were blackened by the smoke; but after a severe struggle with the devouring element, by God's blessing on their exertions, the buildings and their families were saved. At four P.M. the fire rushed over the hill about thirty feet from the chapel, and passed on in a broad sheet of flame, devouring everything in its progress.

"Mr. Nowers requiring medical assistance for his family, I took charge of Waramuri for the next six weeks after this. The broad track of the conflagration was perfectly black. The fire continued burning in many places for weeks, feeding upon the peat of which the soil is partly composed, and upon the enormous trunks of trees which lay in every direction. Some of those burning masses looked perfectly white during the glare of the sun by day, and glowed with intense

brightness as night came. The swamps were on fire in various directions. One evening six conflagrations were visible in different parts of the horizon. The nearest of these communicated with a portion of the forest, the flames catching the dry leaves, and mounting the trees in succession, until their further progress was stopped by the river. Charred skeletons of small animals and reptiles might be seen among the ashes, the remains of snakes being especially numerous.

"While proceeding one day up the river, a crackling noise was heard at a distance, accompanied by a dense smoke. The Indians said that a savannah which we were approaching was on fire, and immediately rested on their paddles. We soon saw the flames driving before the wind, and devouring the reeds and grass, while our further progress was prevented by the burning flakes and smoke, until the fire had burnt down to the edge of the stream. We had to keep our faces close to the water to escape the suffocating vapour.

"The drought was severely felt in the cultivated part of the country, the navigable trenches of the sugar estates being nearly dry. The rivers, from the want of rain, had become salt and brackish to a great distance from their mouths. The heads of the little streamlets were sought for fresh water, and some of them became dry. The cassava which had been planted by the Indians in October, not having the expected rain to nourish it, did not grow. Hence food became scarce, and many expedients were resorted to in order to supply the deficiency. The Waraus betook themselves to their favourite resource, the ita swamps, and subsisted there as well as they could. When the famine was at its height, the fruit of the wild cashew became ripe, and afterwards that of the simiri or locust-

tree. From these and others the Indians managed to procure a scanty subsistence, and might be seen emerging from the forest with their quakes and baskets full of them. Unwholesome food! for using which they afterwards suffered greatly.

"The rain fell at length in torrents, and vegetation revived and flourished. But dysentery began to carry off many of the Waraus and others, who had been subsisting for months on the natural productions of the swamps and forests. There came from the ita swamps to Waramuri canoes full of miserably attenuated beings, who applied to the missionary for medicine and food.

"A great number of them died before they made this application. It was painful to visit their settlements, and hear the repeated exclamation, "Wabaiya, wabaiya!" (*Sick, sick!*). On visiting the settlement where they had been so uncivil to me, Mr. Nowers discovered that eight had already died out of twenty-three, and others would probably have perished but for God's blessing on the remedies supplied. As many as three hundred doses of medicine were administered in one month, and with great apparent benefit, the reluctance of the Indians to use it being overcome by the urgent danger. It was a period of much distress and misery, and were there no other result than the temporal benefit that then flowed from the mission at Waramuri, all the exertion and the small expense of its establishment would have been amply rewarded.

"When the sickness abated, the mission began to assume a most flourishing appearance. Three hundred Indians attended instruction, and there were sixty-five children at school.

"As the benefits, both spiritual and temporal, of missions became apparent to the people, so the desire for similar

establishments began to spread. Intelligence was brought to us that the Waraus in the Aruka were desirous of having a missionary of our Church placed among them, and that their chief had even caused them to erect a large building to serve as a place of worship. We were preparing to visit that part of the country, though the distance is so great that the voyage would occupy about three weeks in going and returning. It is situated in the midst of the tract which lies between our territory and the Orinoco, and through which flow several large streams, one of the principal being the Waini. Our visit was unavoidably prevented, and nothing was done. Still the desire of those benighted people to be instructed in the religion of Christ seems worthy of commemoration, as no missionary had been to visit them, and the reports conveyed by their own countrymen were all they had to found their desires upon. It seemed like the fulfilment of the words of prophecy, 'As soon as they hear of Me, they shall obey Me.'"

Waramuri had been threatened with destruction by fire, and the Indians who attended it had been scattered by famine, and had their numbers thinned by dysentery. Still, notwithstanding these things, the attendance increased, and the mutual attachment between the missionary and his flock grew stronger daily. One Sunday thirty-three canoes full of people came, besides those that travelled overland. But the malaria from the cleared swamp had affected the health of the mission family, in which unceasing sickness and prostration prevailed.

"In August 1846," Mr. Brett writes, "Mr. Nowers's youngest child died. The father, having no materials of which to construct a coffin, was obliged to take the foot-

boards of the mission bateau.* While burying this child the life of his second son was despaired of. This was followed by a violent illness, which attacked both parents, and compelled their removal to the Pomeroon, where the family remained in a languishing state till the end of the year. Mr. Nowers partially recovered, but his complaint rendered him unable to bear the climate, and as the health of the family did not improve, he was compelled to resign his mission. After erecting a wooden slab bearing a simple inscription at the head of the grave of the departed infant and surrounding it with a rail, an affectionate leave was taken of the couple, and Waramuri quitted on the 21st of December, to the great grief of all.

"As we were embarking, a young Carib presented himself with his paddle in his hand and his hammock over his shoulder, and offered his services as a paddler. On being told that our crew was complete, he still persisted in requesting a passage, which was granted.

"The weather was unsettled and stormy at that season. In passing over the sea we encountered three furious squalls, which continued for an hour and a half. We were unable to bring the boat round, as she would have instantly filled if exposed broadside to the waves, which broke over her bows in rapid succession. Our tent was cut away, and Mr. Nowers and an Indian engaged during the whole time in baling out the water with a bucket and a large calabash. The shore was near, but unsafe; and we were unable from the rain and spray of the sea to see more than a few yards of tossing waves around us. While the steersman was striving to keep her head to the wind, his large paddle broke short;

* The bateau is shaped somewhat like an Indian canoe, but *built* instead of being *hollowed from a single tree*. Like the canoe, it has no keel.

but we fortunately had a spare one on board, which was immediately handed to him.

"When the weather cleared, we found that, though our crew had strained every nerve, we were still in the same spot in which the first squall had met us. We were now thankful to God for our additional hand, which had enabled us to maintain the struggle.

"On reaching the mouth of the Pomeroon, we saw a schooner which had been caught in the same storm, and driven across the mud-flat nearly into the forest, although she had dropped her anchor. The master said he hoped to get off next tide, which happened accordingly. Another schooner belonging to the same person was sunk in the next voyage, all on board being drowned except two hands. In this vessel were lost most of Mr. Nowers's goods, which had been removed from Waramuri. He thus had sorrow upon sorrow, and continued ill-health compelled him to depart for England. The Indians, by whom he was greatly beloved, inquired continually whether 'Noa' would not soon come again.

"We must now relate the course of events in the Pomeroon. The Indian women there had, by my marriage some time before, obtained for the first time the valuable services of a teacher of their own sex, whose life was about this time nearly cut short by a sudden danger.

"Some young Indian men, in an open space at the back of the mission-house, were testing their strength by discharging arrows from their powerful bows perpendicularly into the air. One of their largest arrows (of the kind used for killing the tapir), ascending to a great height, was caught by an upper current of air, and carried over the house, which we were just leaving at the summons to evening prayer. The arrow in its lightning-like descent almost

grazed the head of Mrs. Brett, and suddenly arrested her steps, with its feathered end quivering against her shoulder, and its spear-headed iron point buried some inches deep in the earth at her feet. It was a moment of sudden terror, where all had been peace and apparent safety; for her life (under God) had depended on one inch of space or one second of time. Our thankfulness was fully shared by the Indians around, and equalled by the regret of the young fellows for the carelessness which had so nearly caused a fatal accident.

"The people of this river suffered less during the famine than the improvident Waraus, having had a better stock of provisions, and had taken care to replant their fields as soon as they saw 'the sun kill' the first crop.

"But depredations were frequently committed by parties who, having been the dupes of the great imposture, had neglected their own fields, and were now destitute of provisions on their own return. A report reached us that two Acawoios had been killed by Caribs, who had detected them in the act of robbing their fields in a distant part of the country. This and other circumstances, whether true or not, seemed to threaten a feud. The dysentery had also visited the Indians in Pomeroon, but was chiefly fatal when it attacked children, many of whom died, but few adults.

"In March 1847, an occurrence took place which exhibited a new feature in Indian life. The mission was, as usual, in a state of the greatest tranquillity, when Commodore, the Caribi chief, came thither to reside with his son and family for protection. He had built a large house in front of our Caribi village for the accommodation of himself and family on the Sabbath, and planted a tall flag-staff before it as a symbol of his rank; but during the week he usually lived at his settlement in the forest. The latter he

now quitted, as he said, in consequence of having discovered that a strong party of Acawoios, painted and equipped for war, were lurking near it. I thought but little of the circumstance, as the Indians generally had been in a very unsettled state ever since the unhappy migration. The family had with them a young man who had taken to wife a heathen daughter of the old chief. He was a stranger from a distant part, and was noted for never moving from the house without a short-barrelled gun in his hand.

"After the services of the following Sunday were concluded, we were disturbed about nine in the evening by a loud outcry proceeding from the Caribi portion of the village. While we were doubting as to the cause, Commodore's son and another young man came in a hurried manner to summon me, bearing torches and cutlasses in their hands. They declared that the Acawoios were upon them, and had struck down the young stranger. Proceeding to the spot, I found the young man writhing in his hammock, apparently in great pain from a blow on the thigh. The women were crying around him in a frantic manner, and the whole village was in an uproar, every man getting his weapons to defend himself and family. With great difficulty I learned that the young man, who had gone some little distance from the houses, had seen an Acawoio approaching him from the forest, and had suddenly turned and sprung upon him, throwing his arms around him, but had been hurled to the ground by the superior strength of his enemy, and received a random blow as he fell, the Acawoio escaping into the forest, as the cry for assistance was raised and answered.

"Nothing could exceed the panic of the women and children, and the men were all asking what they should do.

It seemed best to tell them to assemble outside the chief's house, while the women and children should keep inside. This they did, but the confusion was great, the house being quite full, and some of the females crying, others laughing hysterically, and many talking with great vehemence at the same time.

"At this moment, the wife of the young man ran into the midst of us crying out that a man was concealed behind a bush near the house. Immediately every gun was pointed in that direction, and some of the Caribs began to spread themselves around, gliding close to the ground, with their pieces cocked and advanced, ready to be discharged at the slightest motion. The night was very dark, but many torches were blazing around, and the young woman before mentioned rushed wildly forward with the men, whirling a blazing firebrand to give them additional light.

"A low cry was heard close at hand, which was answered from a distance. The Caribs exclaimed 'Acawoio!' and became exasperated. I then desired young Commodore to tell them all to stop and listen. This arrested them, and he then interpreted that 'even if they should kill an Acawoio, they would make bad worse, and the blood-feud would never end. If enemies were there, they were probably few, and unprovided with firearms, and the Post-holder should be instantly sent for, who, when he came, would settle the matter between their tribes in a peaceable and Christian manner.'

"The messengers were accordingly sent, and the Caribs satisfied themselves with posting guards outside the house till morning.

"I then went to see the state of the Arawaks, one of the Caribs running after me with a torch (which I had forgotten), lest I should have been shot by mistake in the dark. It

was no needless precaution, for each Arawak had his gun prepared, having heard the sound in the forest, which they said was the voice of men. No woman went to the water that night unless attended by her husband, who carried his cutlass and a blazing firebrand. Many tales were afloat to account for an attack of the Acawoios, which seemed to have been expected for some time before. Most of our people thought that they were a party from Cuyuni or from Massaruni, sent by the impostor there to attack our mission.

"The next morning young Commodore with a party of his men scoured the forest in hopes of discovering the Acawoios and entering into a parley. They returned without success, having only found a small basket of Acawoio manufacture.

"On the second morning the Postholder arrived from his house at the mouth of the Pomeroon, having travelled all night. We went together towards the head of the river. As we were proceeding on the following morning up the beautiful windings of the stream, we heard a low whoop from the high bank above us. This proceeded from France, Commodore's brother, who had quitted his settlement, and, with his wives and children, was going to seek shelter among his heathen relatives. He said that a woman had seen two Acawoios in a field not far distant, and had been pursued by them towards her house. All the people in that part were in a great panic, and though much allowance was to be made for excitement and exaggeration, it seemed certain that there was a strong party lurking in the forests with no good intention.

"It afterwards appeared that the father of the young Carib who had been assaulted had, two years before, been assassinated before his eyes, and that he, having discharged

an arrow at the men who killed him, had been marked out to be put to death. Whether he considered himself as bound by their fearful custom to be the avenger of blood, we know not, but it seemed evident, from his wild manner, that his mind was affected by the circumstances in which he was placed. His life having been attempted in the Essequibo, where he resided, he fled to Pomeroon, and this led to the events here related. I did not consider his presence desirable at the mission, and recommended him to seek employment at the coast on one of the sugar estates, whither his enemies would not be able to follow him with any prospect of success in their murderous design.

"The mission again became quiet as before. Never had its buildings appeared so neat, and all the paths which led to the different parts of the village were kept in good order, and bordered with lilies, whose flowers of brilliant scarlet contrasted beautifully with their dark green leaves.

"At this time the sad news of the famine in Ireland and in the Highlands of Scotland reached us. Collections were made all over the colony for the relief of the sufferers. The subject was laid before the Indians at the mission, and they at once offered to contribute cassava and other provisions, for the relief of the hungry people. When told that they would spoil in the passage over the wide sea, they said that they had little money, as the drought of the preceding year had reduced them to penury, and their clothes were nearly worn out, their young men being at that time absent working for money to buy more. This was the truth, as I knew.

"Cornelius was present, and, seeing how matters stood, he went quietly away. He had just returned from the sugar estates, bringing with him about ten dollars, the produce of his industry, with which he was about to proceed

to Georgetown to purchase clothes for his family. This sum he brought and laid before me. Taking one dollar, he said, 'I give this for myself, and this,' said he, adding another, 'for my wife and eldest daughter.' Then turning to his countrymen he continued, 'Friends, you have little money, I will lend you from this till it is gone, and repay me when you are able.' One after another availed themselves of the offer; others rummaged up a little more; some poor old widows brought their 'half-bits,' (twopence), and fifty-two dollars were sent that week from Pomeroon. Half of that sum was collected among the inhabitants of the lower district of the river.

"The mission at Waramuri was then lying desolate, and that on the Pomeroon was about to share its fate. I became at this period too weak to continue my duties. After lingering many days, I was reluctantly compelled to send for paddlers to convey me to the sea-coast. The messenger told the Indians whom he met, and the news spread widely along the rivers during the night. The next morning before daybreak we heard a low hum of voices around the mission-house. It was the lament of our poor people, some of whom had come many miles through the darkness, and brought little presents of pines and other fruits, which we could not eat. As if they had not previously been kind enough to us, or we had needed gifts to induce us to stay!

"Our parting need not be described. The voyage was very sorrowful. My wife and new-born infant beside me were both suffering greatly from the want of medical aid, and when at times I raised my head, I saw that Cornelius, who steered, could not restrain his tears, which ran down his cheeks as he silently looked on us and thought he saw in our departure the ruin of his hopes for his people's good.

"Several months elapsed. At length I was enabled to pay a monthly visit of several days to the mission. But in May 1849 increasing debility compelled me to return to England, leaving, with deep regret, both stations vacant.

"To that at Waramuri Mr. Currie was soon after sent as catechist; but he too was in about a year disabled by sickness, and compelled to leave, having lost his wife and child a few months before.

"Repeated afflictions of that kind seemed likely to compel the final abandonment of that station, which was far beyond the reach of medical aid.

"We knew that in such a case the verdant forest would soon cover the place where stood the house of prayer, and where the departed members of the mission await the resurrection morn. But we knew also that the story of the mission at Waramuri would not be soon forgotten, but that the Indian fathers would point to that hill with its mysterious mound, and tell their children of the hundreds of men who assembled and cleared that extent of ground, and willingly assisted in building a place of worship where themselves and families might be taught the religion of the Lord Jesus.

"A dark cloud now hung over the sister missions. During its continuance we could only exercise faith in the Divine promises, and pray that He whose religion we had feebly endeavoured to plant amidst those dense forests and marshy savannahs would yet 'look down from heaven, behold and visit that vine.'"

CHAPTER VII.

Translation work in four different languages—Cornelius learning the Ten Commandments in "English"—List of chief translations—Translation Committee—S.P.C.K.—Notes on the languages of Guiana.

WHAT in some respects may be considered the greatest work achieved by this missionary, for which the Church must ever be grateful, was the service he rendered in adapting the language of the nation to the purpose of his mission. Mr. Brett found that the languages spoken by his people were four in number and all *unwritten*. In this work he had to systematise these languages, phonetically form vocabularies, and compose a grammar. And he was forced to this because he felt that it would be impossible for him to teach the Indians in English. How he set to work we are thus told by himself:—

"It was a very sultry noontide, and as I approached the house, I saw my Indian friend Cornelius, alone, resting in his hammock. At first I thought he was merely taking a siesta after his morning's work, but as I drew nearer, I could hear him labouring painfully in his efforts to read the Ten Commandments from a little English Prayer-book. A gentle breeze was sighing through the tall bamboos, and a thick carpet formed by their leaves helped to deaden the sound of my approaching footsteps, so that he was not aware of my presence as I came and looked over him. He stumbled on until he came to the words 'third and fourth

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generation,' when he paused and sighed hopelessly. As he did so I laid my hand on his shoulder, and asked in Arawak 'if he could understand the words he was trying to read.' He rose with a sudden start, dropping from his face what should have been a *pair* of spectacles, but which, as I picked them up, I found to be but *one glass* instead of two.

"After answering an inquiry respecting the person who had imposed on his simplicity by selling him the one-eyed spectacles, he replied to my first question by telling me that the words were so hard that he could not understand them; that his daughter, who, having been at our school, could read fairly, could not enlighten him as to their meaning; that he knew the Apostles' Creed, Lord's Prayer, &c., in English by heart, and had a general idea of the leading truths of Christianity; but that the words themselves of our Bible and Prayer-book were so different from the 'talkee talkee' or Negro-English to which his people were accustomed, that those Indians already grown up (who really used Creole-Dutch rather than English) would never learn effectually by them.

"I felt, by what I had myself observed, it was *all too true*, and that nearly a generation must pass ere the Arawaks—the most advanced of all the tribes around me—could be readily and generally taught through the medium of our tongue.

"It was necessary to remedy the evil at any cost. I knew already a good deal of Arawak, and now asked him how it would be if the Lord's Prayer, Creed, &c., could be printed in their native tongue. He caught eagerly at the idea; and so, with the aid of himself and family, the work of translation was commenced. We did as well as we could, blundering at first immensely, as our orthography had to be made and our grammar discovered as we went on. It was

not easy, for the construction of all those aboriginal tongues is in most points directly opposite to our own.

"The Lord's Prayer and Creed, printed in Georgetown on a small sheet as the first-fruits, were eagerly received and learned. So rapidly did the knowledge of them spread, that at a settlement more that thirty miles away I found some Arawaks able to repeat both without the necessity of my teaching them.

"Many passages, however, troubled us exceedingly, from there being no corresponding words or phrases in their tongue. Others could only be expressed by words of ambiguous meaning. But on the whole we got on fairly; the Indians inventing now and then a compound word to express the idea required. Their children, taught at the schools, began also to be a great help to me.

"An unexpected aid arose afterwards in the person of Wilhelmina, sister of Cornelius's wife. She had, when I married some time before, attached herself to my household, learning from my wife what she could, that she might communicate it to the women of her race, and thereby teach them civilised habits. As an instance of this, I may mention that she *first* procured washing-tubs, flat-irons, &c., and taught her Indian sisters in that district the art of laundress. 'For,' as she observed, 'if we are to wear clothes, we must learn to wash and do them up.' But when I first came upon them in the act of 'doing them up,' they ran away, ashamed and afraid of being laughed at.

"That good woman never spoke to her mistress save in Arawak, in order, as she afterwards confessed, to 'make her learn it quickly.' Her regular and intelligent features used to brighten when discussion took place on the meanings and power of words; yet she never interfered in any way between me and my male assistants. But frequently when

they were gone, and I would mention in my family points on which I was at the time hopelessly puzzled, she would modestly give the phrase I wanted, or a certain clue to guide me to it. She had a clearer mind and judgment than any of her race I ever met with, male or female.

"Years after, I found her aid invaluable in correcting the translation of the first part of Genesis, the four Gospels, and the Acts of the Apostles. These, with a catechism explanatory of the Apostles' Creed and Sacraments, the Baptismal and Marriage Vows, some prayers, and afterwards a larger catechism on the historical portions of the Old and New Testaments, completed our labours in the Arawak tongue, and effectually accomplished what they were intended to do. They are now but little needed, as the Arawaks generally have learned English at our missions, and some can read and write it very well.

"In carrying on that work, I was greatly hindered by the wants of other races, whose necessities were even greater, because they were more barbarous and ignorant. First of these came the Pomeroon Caribs, who were jealous. I had to stop and do something of the kind for them; and thus, until health broke down utterly, we had the two nations, each in its own tongue, instructed on alternate evenings throughout the week.

"Knowing the eloquence and zeal of Cornelius, I wrote in Arawak, and in large Roman characters, a translation of our Lord's last charge to His disciples, from St. Mark xvi., and taught him to read and explain it. With this, serving him both for text and credentials, he was sent on a mission to scattered and distant families whom he had not yet been able to influence. We bade him God speed, and he went away quite alone in a little 'buckshell.' After nearly a fortnight he returned with

three canoes and twelve men. These represented twelve Arawak families, who soon after attached themselves to the mission."

The languages which Mr. Brett mastered, which he did completely, were Arawak, Caribi, Acawaio, and Warau, into which he translated portions of the Old and New Testaments, comprehensive catechisms in each, portions of the Church Services, &c. All these he had to reduce to written languages, which in itself was no light task, as the difficulty of catching the words as pronounced by the people was very great, and the substitute of an "e" for an "a," an "o" for a "u," often has the effect of entirely altering the meaning of a word, and sometimes a whole sentence. Many of the vowels were a mere soft breathing, which it was difficult to express by any of our English vowels, and it was by no means a rare thing to spend from ten minutes to half an hour in getting one word spelt correctly. Mr. Brett selected the most intelligent men and women, but never had more than one or two with him at a time; and two hours at a sitting was as long as they could fix their attention. He had his Greek and Latin Testaments, and Mrs. Brett the English, she having been his sole English-speaking assistant in this work from 1845 to 1871. The work was most interesting and instructive, and these translations have been of inestimable value in diffusing the knowledge of the Gospel amongst the native tribes, even in the far interior and all parts of the country.

The following is a list of the principal translations:—

Caribi—Lord's Prayer, Creed and Ten Commandments, with Questions and Answers, Baptismal and Marriage Vows, Short Prayers, &c., &c. Also Catechisms (150 questions and answers) on Bible History, Old and New Testaments.

Warau—The same as in Caribi.

Arawak—The same.
Acawoio—The same.
Also in Arawak—Translations of Genesis, the four Gospels, and Acts.
In Acawoio—Translations of St. Matthew, Genesis, and Parables of our Lord.
Arawak Grammar and Vocabulary.
Do. Caribi, Acawoio, Warau.

This great work was partly done at the missions and partly on the same spot on which this Memoir is compiled, Holy Trinity Rectory. When the work was done in the bush, this was the mode of procedure, as described by Mr. Brett :—

"A *Translation Committee* was organised, which met during my quarterly visits. It consisted of two Arawaks who spoke Warau, two Caribs similarly qualified, and one or two young Waraus who were learning English. To these was added the old Warau chief, who was dull and could not construe a sentence, but his presence gave importance to the work, and was supposed by his people *somehow* to ensure its correctness.

"Our place of meeting was at an old abandoned house or shed, standing apart from the mission-village, and out of the reach of disturbance from the voices of women and children. The 'committee' sat on rough logs, ranged on the sand in the open building; and we had carefully to examine our feet for chigoes and exterminate them after each sitting. Altogether we were a rough and queer-looking party; and our good friends of the S.P.C.K., for whom we were then preparing work, would have been greatly amused to see us.

"The Acawoios readily understand the Caribs, but are not as easily understood by them. Their language has

considerable variation, owing to the vast extent of territory over which it is spoken. Of all the native tongues, it seems the most difficult for a stranger to pronounce; and there are in it some sounds which no combination of the letters of the English alphabet can accurately express. This tongue is spoken on the upper parts of all our large rivers, from the Corentyn to the Orinoco.

The Arawak and Warau tongues differ from each other and from the rest. The dissimilarity observable in words extends also to many points in their grammatical construction. But though in many things there is a wide distinction, there are others in which *all* the Indian dialects of Guiana seem to agree.

"For instance, the words which have the power of prepositions in English always *follow* the noun or pronoun to which they refer. This will be seen in the following examples, the words which answer to our preposition being in italics :—

English—On earth.
Arawak—Orora *ajeago*.
Warau—Hota' *rai*.
Caribi—Noano *kopo*.
Acawoio—Nohn *bo*.

Another point in which the different nations agree is their method of numeration. The first four numbers are represented by simple words, but five is 'my one hand,' *abar dakabo* in Arawak. Then comes a repetition, *abar-timen*, &c., up to nine. *Biam-dakabo*, 'my two hands,' is ten. From ten to twenty they use the toes (*kuti* or *okuti*), as *abar-kuti-bana*, 'eleven,' *biam-kuti bana*, 'twelve,' &c. They call twenty *abarloko*, one *loko* or man. They then proceed by *men* or scores; thus forty-five is labo-

riously expressed by *biam-loko abar-dakabo tajeago*, 'two men and one hand upon it.' For higher numbers they have now recourse to our words *hundred* and *thousand*.

"As far as my researches have extended, this method of numeration prevails among the different tribes.

"The Indian children, who learn to read and write with facility, and comprehend with no great difficulty the elementary instruction given them in geography, &c., are most backward in acquiring the simplest rudiments of arithmetic. The imperfect and barbarous method of reckoning by *hands*, *feet*, and complete *men*, which each learns with his mother-tongue, is a formidable obstacle to the acquirement of our decimal system.

"The American-Indian languages mostly belong to what has been called the *polysynthetic* class, which are well known to be very different in structure from the European tongues. In some of them words are abbreviated and combined in a manner that to us appears confused and embarrassing, but which is really full of order and method.

"The Arawak language, though of course not to be compared with our own in the number of its words, has considerable power of expression, and its verbs are very rich in moods and tenses. It would be out of place to attempt here any explanation of its structure; but it may be briefly observed that its complexity is greatly increased by the system of regimen which pervades it, and in various ways affects different parts of speech,—the governed words almost always ending with the letter *n*. The sentences *lajiagoba tohojin* and *tohojia la-goba-ajian* have precisely the same meaning, 'he spake thus;' but in the former the verb governs the adverb, which *follows* it, while in the latter the adverb *preceding* governs, and entirely changes the form of the verb. There are other changes of form in each

conjugation, according to the nature and position of the governing word.

"Some of the Indian words are of great length, and, though not quite so extensive as those used by certain tribes of the northern continent (among whom polysyllables stretching across a page are not uncommon), are yet sufficient to dismay a learner. Among the Arawaks, such words as *lokoborokwatoasia*, 'his thought' or 'remembrance;' *kabuintimen-kutibanano*, 'eighteen,' &c., are continually used. The length of their verbs is increased by the manner in which the pronouns are combined with them; and sometimes also from the syllables which contain the root of the verb being doubled, to express the continuance or intensity of the action. In *nahhdadadikitagobai*, 'they continued asking him' (pronounced by the Arawaks as a single word), the reduplication may be observed, and both the nominative and objective pronouns (each expressed by a single letter) are contained.

"In those long words, almost every syllable would be found to have its own particular force and meaning, though some to us may appear redundant. For example, an Arawak says simply *Dai-iyu*, 'my mother;' but *Wai-iyu-na-tu*, 'our mother.' To us the sense of this latter word would appear sufficiently expressed by the first two syllables, *wa* and *iyu*, which are respectively 'our' and 'mother.' But, as if the idea of plurality (of offspring) were not sufficiently expressed by the first syllable, the Indian repeats it in the penultimate *na*, and closes the word with *tu*, the usual singular feminine termination. So also in the Caribi word *ke-yoboturi-kun*, which signifies 'our lord.' *Yoboturi* is equivalent to 'lord' or 'ruler,' and the idea of plurality in those whom he rules, which the first syllable conveys, is repeated in the last. The Acawoio form of the same word,

keyobororikun, and *kikaibunikun*, by which they express 'our father,' are exactly similar in their construction."

To enter further into this subject would exceed our limits and weary the reader. It may be sufficient to observe that the remarks made by a laborious investigator[1] on the American native languages in general will be found to hold good of more than one now moribund in Guiana:—"They are rich in words and grammatical forms, and *in their complicated construction the greatest order, method, and regularity prevail.*"

Many words of Spanish origin have been added to those of the aboriginal languages. They are the names of objects with which the Indians were unacquainted previously to their discovery by that nation. Thus they call a goat *kabaritu*, and a fowl *karina*, from the Spanish words *cabarita* and *gallina*. *Sapatu*, their word for shoe, is from the Spanish *zapato;* and from *arcabùz* comes *arakabusa*, which the Indians apply to firearms. In like manner, several Dutch words, more or less altered, are now incorporated with the native tongues.

"Long before this I had known the value of pictures in teaching those wild races, of whose tongues we know so little. In my early intercourse with them we had been greatly in want of a set of Scripture prints, which, though sent out to me by one of the societies, went somewhere else. I hope they were useful wherever they went; but we were in need of them, and had to do without them. Finding something of the kind indispensable, I used at one time to carry about with me a heavy copy of Burkitt's Commentary, having at that period no other book with suitable engravings. Sometimes, being quite at a loss to explain important words, such as crucifixion, &c., I would

[1] Mr. Du Ponceau.

with pencil and paper make a rough sketch, and generally found that the interest which words imperfectly understood failed to convey by the ear was excited by objects presented to the eye.

"Bearing this in mind, I asked the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge to furnish us with cards containing the Creed and Lord's Prayer in Warau (and two other native tongues), with little engravings of important Scriptural subjects ranged in medallions around the letterpress. When this was done it succeeded marvellously with all those races. For they learned the meaning of the *engravings first*, and were thereby aroused to attend to the *words*. The Warau females were especially attracted. Poor women! they had at last *got something they could comprehend*, and were no longer shut out, as they had before considered themselves to be.

"And here I may notice, that in a year or two a manifest change took place in the appearance of those women. They would at first come to church in a painfully nude condition, and with their hair matted and dishevelled as in their native swamps. But soon the '*camisa*,' or petticoat slung over one shoulder, began to be generally used by them; and, as a next step, their hair would be combed out, and done up in some neat braiding on their heads.

"And when the Society, as the work of translation went on, printed for us catechisms on the Creed and Sacraments, Baptismal and Marriage Vows, with a few prayers, and afterwards that on the Bible history, uniform with those in three other Indian tongues (the Acawoios having by that time joined us), then candidates for Baptism and the Lord's Supper came forward from among the Waraus as from the other races.

"This progress was the more comforting as the people

themselves were lower than the tribes around them, and had, in the beginning of our work, manifested such total indifference.

"The grace of God is mighty, and able to elevate all. May His work among these poor people still go on!"

Mr. Brett, in a note to the eleventh chapter of his "Indian Tribes of Guiana," Part II., supplies us with the means of judging between the four best-known Indian dialects; and the quotation of this will form an appropriate conclusion to this chapter.

"The following short vocabulary will show the difference in the languages of neighbouring tribes in Guiana:—

English.	Arawak.	Warau.	Caribi.	Acawoio.
Sun	Adaili	Ya	Weyu	Wiyenu
Moon	Kaci	Wanika	Nono	Kapui
Star	Wiwa	Hura	Sidigyu	Sirigyu
Fire	Ikihi	Eykuno	Watu	Ahpoh
Water	Oniabu	Ho	Tona	Tona
Rain	Oini	Naha	Konobo	Tona
Stone or Rock	Siba	Hoeyu	Toubo	Touk
Sand	Motogo	Kahemura	Sakou	Wotsuk
Island	Kaieri	Hota-boroho	Pahu	Opahwo
Man	Wadili	Nebora.	Wakuri	Warraio
Woman	Hiaro	Tida.	Wori	Orichan
(My) Head	Da'si	Ma'qua	U'bopo	U'bopai
(My) Hand	Da'kabo	Ma'muho	U'enari	U'yenzari
House	Bawhu	Anoko	Owtuh	Owteh
One	Abar	Ishakka	Ohi	Tegina
Two	Biama	Manam	Oko	Azara
Three	Kabuin	Dianam	Oroa	Osorowa
Four	Bibici	Orabakaia	Okobaime	Azagrene
Five	Abar-dakabo	Moabass	Unyatone	Miararoe-pukin
Six	Abar-timen	Momatani-shakka	Ohi-yopemako	Tegina-miararoe
Seven	Biam-timen	Momatani-manam	Oko-yopemako	Azare-miararoe
Eight	Kabuin-timen	Momatani-dianam	Oroa-yopemako	Osorowa-miararoe
Nine	Bibici-timen	Momatani-orabakaia	Okobaime-yopemako	Azagrene-miararoe
Ten	Biam-dakabo	Mohoreko.	Unyabatura.	Miararo-mara.

"Of the above languages, that of the Arawâks, as has been before observed, is most remarkable for its softness. It abounds in vowels, and from the manner in which the words combine with and run into each other, it is very difficult

for a learner to acquire it. Hence there is a proverbial saying, that "None can thoroughly master their tongue unless his *mother* were one of the *lokono*.' The people of this tribe, inhabiting the various river districts, have in each locality certain peculiarities of speech; but these differences are small, and in all important points the language is the same.

"The Warau or Guarano tongue is more easily acquired than any other, its words being comparatively few and very distinctly pronounced. It is used not only by the Waraus themselves, through the immense swampy region inhabited chiefly by them, from the Pomeroon to and beyond the Delta of the Orinoco, but also by the tribes which dwell around them, as a common medium of communication.

"The Caribi tongue, though somewhat more guttural than either of the above, is spoken in a smart, vivacious manner. Those with whom I had more immediate intercourse claimed to speak it in its purity, and regarded as corrupt the language of those Caribs who elsewhere had intermarried with other races.

"The Acawoio tongue, as may be seen above, bears a strong resemblance to the Caribi, but has even a closer affinity to the dialects of the remoter tribes of the interior."

CHAPTER VIII.

Discomforts—Perils by Sea and by Land—"Ground Itch"—"Bridges"—Snakes—Narrow Escapes—"Gally Nippers"—Chigoes—Interruption of Divine Service.

Travelling in the "Bush" or in the forests, as well as on the rivers and creeks of the colony, is not free from danger. The chief mode of transit is by water, in "wood skins" or "buck shells"—the bark of trees or trunks hollowed out, and usually called "corials." Travelling cramped up in these corials, as the writer knows from experience, is anything but pleasant, and during a wet season especially is full of discomfort. About this mode of travelling Mr. Brett says:—

"We had, of course, discomfort enough from the burning sun, and from the heavy rains of the wet season. Such rain as falls on those tropical rivers!—furious, unrelenting, and so thick and heavy that every object not close to you is hidden from sight by it. To sit upon a bench was simply to sit in water. I found that the only way in those deluges was to place myself on a small box, arrange my cloak, and let it hang loosely all around, so as to carry the water down at once, holding at the same time an umbrella close over my head. In that style you look something like a huge mushroom, but manage to escape a good deal of wet. In the most violent rains, however, all such defences are inadequate to save you from a soaking.

"My lads adopted a very different method. They had no umbrellas, and could not have used their paddles if they had. So they would take off their shirts, put them carefully up in their *pegalls* (or covered waterproof baskets), and let the rain beat on their naked bodies. They said it was not half so bad as to sit in a wet garment. They generally pulled with all their might to keep themselves warm during the fury of the rain, and when it cleared away put on their dry garments and made themselves comfortable.

"Sometimes, in those rainstorms, we would meet other Indians in their little corials scudding along, and caring little for weather if wind and tide were with them. A few leaves of the troolie palm, held by the mothers over themselves and children, were their umbrellas; and one or two long ones would be held up to catch the wind and serve as a sail.

"Such is open canoe travelling in Guiana during the wet season, when you have torrents of rain for days together, with frequent thunder and lightning.

"In the dry season the heat is, of course, severe while the sun is high, but heavy dew and often thick mists prevail from evening until morning. As the sun gets low the breeze dies away, and you see the vapour settling on the water and spreading everywhere. Frequently in embarking (to save tide) about three in the morning we would see the mist gliding over the river in large masses, conveying as we passed through them the idea of the smoke of a cannon and musketry in some fierce engagement. This is pretty enough in the moonlight, but very chilly and prejudicial to health, especially if you, having had much previous fatigue, become drowsy and fall asleep in the damp and noxious vapour."

But when one is bound to cross an arm of the sea

some five miles wide—as Mr. Brett had to do every time he journeyed from the Pomeroon to the Moruca—the task is neither an easy nor a safe one. On one occasion, when Mr. Brett was at sea in his corial or "shell," he says:—"We were met by a heavy squall, ending in downright torrents of rain, which certainly beat the sea quite smooth, but at the same time hid the shore from view and threatened to swamp us. At length we got upon the mud flat, where we could not sink, and baled the craft clear of water. The rain passed off, but so thick was the air, that for some time the only visible object was a cormorant, sitting near us on a stick, which some Warau fisherman had planted there to attach his hooks to. The bird looked as woe-begone as ourselves, though he was probably quite comfortable in his waterproof plumage, digesting his fishy breakfast."

On another occasion Mr. Brett writes :—

"In the Waramuri boat Mr. Nowers and myself were caught by a sudden and violent storm on the sea. He with a bucket and an Indian with a large calabash were hard at work, baling incessantly to keep us from sinking, as the surf washed over our bows ; six men were pulling for their lives to keep us off shore and head to wind, while I had to cut away the tent, which was drifting us back by receiving the fury of the gale. For an hour and a half we were in this jeopardy, and were very thankful when the storm ceased, which it did suddenly, as it had begun."

Soon after this the missionary was provided with properly built tent-boats, which afford a degree of comfort, although even with such craft travelling was often attended with danger.

"The heavy rollers on one occasion," says Mr. Brett, "dashed our canoe against some old piles of timber, which broke in her side like an egg-shell, causing her to fill with

water as we jumped ashore. At another time our tent was shattered by a blow from a heavy sea and carried away.

"It was a ticklish matter to cross on the round, slippery trunk, but we could not help being amused at the Caribs who led us. In their anxiety for our safety they begged us most seriously to 'hold on with our feet,' forgetting, in the darkness, that our toes were enveloped in boots, while they wore none."

The danger from snakes is frequently great, and from this Mr. Brett had often narrow escapes. Thus, when he was at "Hackney," of which we shall presently speak, a labaria lurked in a box containing school-books and papers, which he was about to take out with his hand, when his Indian boy arrested it. The snake was invisible to him until the box was overturned, when it went into a pew and was killed there with sticks by his Indians. "I record this with humble thanks to the Divine goodness and mercy," Mr. Brett adds. Whenever the missionary was compelled to take shelter in uninhabited *benabs* the Indians usually made a diligent search for such lodgers as snakes, scorpions, vampires, &c., in order to destroy them. On one occasion, whilst Mr. Brett was accompanied by the Bishop, they were overtaken by fierce lightning and heavy thunder, and they entered a hut. "A fire was lighted, and the rising smoke soon brought out a snake, with bright green back and white belly. I wished to save its life, as it was perfectly harmless, save to vermin. But there is enmity between the Indians and all species of snakes, so that all are killed. This unfortunate, though harmless and elegant, specimen was driven by long sticks from rafter to rafter, until he fell across a beam, and thence on to the earthen floor, where he was in a few seconds destroyed by as many fatal blows as there were

HAULING BOATS OVER FALLS. *P.* 88.

Indians to strike at him." But these were not all the inconveniences which the missionary had to submit to. One of the greatest pests in these regions is the mosquito; especially annoying is a species of this insect called "gally nippers," probably a sailor's expression for "*jolly* nippers." Their sting and their noise are both irritating. Sometimes in certain localities Mr. Brett was compelled to get into his hammock—properly enveloped in its curtain—by 4 P.M., and woe be unto him if the netting had but a single hole! New-comers suffer terribly from this. The Bishop and his Archdeacon (Jones), as Mr. Brett records, visited the missions alternately every year, and on one occasion they were together. The Archdeacon, "about eight o'clock one morning, called my attention to his boots. He had been trying to write, with little success, and the 'gally nippers' brushed down from face and hands had settled on his feet so thickly that each boot looked as if it were covered with patches of grey fur. That appearance arose from the wings of the insects, which are of a grey colour. The extremities of the hind legs are also of a silvery white, and are held up in the air, as if to throw all the weight of the tiny body on the proboscis. With that weapon, so sharp and slender, they will try even to bore through leather if they scent human blood beneath, and perseveringly continue, though all their efforts be in vain.

"The *marabuntas* also are a source of great annoyance. Their sting is fearfully severe—worse than a hornet's. Then there is the chigo.

"Now, the chigo (*chegoe*, or, as it is commonly called, '*jigger*') resembles a small flea—so very small, indeed, that you can hardly see it on your skin. Bare feet it is sure to attack, and it will also get into your shoe and through your stocking. In half an hour it has buried itself

beneath your skin. Perhaps, if you are very busy, you do not notice it for a day or two, when you begin to feel a slight pain and itching. The intruder must be got out; and if the globule of a nest which it has formed be not larger than a pin's head, you may do it easily with the point of a pen-knife. If it be bigger, approaching the size of a pea, you must get some person with good eyes and delicate touch (a young Indian girl is the best operator) to remove the skin with the point of a needle, and try to extract the nest entire with the chigo in it. Should it burst, which when large it is likely to do, you will have much pain and trouble, as the insect burrows as fast as an effort is made to impede or rake it out. The bleeding of the lacerated flesh rather embarrasses it, and sometimes it is washed out by the blood; but whether that be the case or not, *out it must come*, for if it remain and breed you will soon find there a spreading mass of chigoes, and be like that unfortunate monk who in the interest of science endeavoured to carry one alive in his foot during a voyage to Europe, and lost his life thereby."

In the works of Mr. Brett we read of many other such annoyances. But what must have been both a source of levity and irritation was the disturbance of Divine Service by reptiles. At times the whole congregation was thrown into a panic by the sudden appearance of a snake. The Indians hate them so deeply that everything that is available is at once used as a weapon, and the intruder destroyed.

On one occasion Mr. Brett writes :—

"While officiating at the Lord's Table I saw what seemed to be a large black scorpion come crawling round the plated chalice. A little Carib girl having recently died in convulsions three hours after being stung by one of these, I kept my eye on it with some anxiety." On another

occasion :—"In the year 1871 a large bank of 'drift mud' floated in, and located itself across the channel leading into the Moruca. Not knowing this, we got aground on it one evening just about dusk. The water took itself off so rapidly that my Indian hands (eight fine young men of various tribes) stripped off their clothes and struggled through the mud to push the boat over; but all was in vain—mud seemed to rise above water all around us, and by eight o'clock there was no sea within a mile or two in either direction. The young men were, of course, covered with wet mud from head to foot, and there was not even a puddle to wash in. Some got into the boat and commenced scraping each other with knives and a cutlass, to get off the worst of it; and then they huddled on their garments, for a cold wind, the percursor of a squall, was blowing in from the sea. By degrees all were in the boat and dressed, save one. That one insisted on remaining outside, buried up to his shoulders in the mud, and holding on with one hand, to keep himself from going down altogether. He declared that it was 'too cold to get out.' At last, when I served out rations to the rest, and told him that he should have none while he remained there in the wet mud, like an 'orehu,' or *water-mama* (the Indian mermaid), he clambered on board, and was duly scraped like his comrades.

"A heavy shower then fell, and drove them all, with the strong odour of the drift-mud still on them, into the tent, where we were crowded on each other. Then it cleared up and the stars came out brilliantly. Midnight came and passed, and as we watched Orion rise in beauty above the ocean, followed by Sirius, Canopus, and others, a slight murmur was heard, and the dark bank on which we lay seemed to sink gently into the sea. It was the next tide, which had quietly worked in all around us, and was soon

lapping against our sides and carrying us, nothing loth, on our way."

Such were some of the experiences of the missionary in his journeys on the water. We will now give some of his experiences while journeying in the forests. He says :—

"A person of ordinary intelligence can hardly, I think, stand alone in those forests without a feeling of religious veneration—you are so entirely away from the bustling world, and feel so small amidst the innumerable stately objects around you. And the efforts which they all seem making to raise their heads into the light and glory of the sun and sky above them seem to invite you to lift your soul heavenward, and adore the Great Father in that many-pillared cathedral which His hand hath reared.

"The rapid step with which, in forest marches, you have to keep up with your Indian guide is not, I admit, very favourable to thoughts and feelings like these. But when a halt is made, and you pause to observe the scene around, they will come over you.

"In early journeys with my Indian boys I have frequently found myself wandering on alone, some object of interest, as a bird or the track of a wild animal crossing the path, having caused them to linger behind. On such occasions it was necessary to wait for them wherever the Indian paths intersected or branched off, for had I trusted to myself in such a matter I should have been pretty sure to take the wrong one. In about half an hour the ringing thump thump of their feet would be heard, hurrying along to overtake their teacher before he could fall into mischief.

"One day, while thus going on ahead, I came to a spot where a large tree had fallen across the path. I was getting over it, when, from a cleft in the damp, rotting wood, the head of a venomous labaria darted forth close to my

hand. No harm was done, but I remained close by to warn my lads of the danger, and when they came up they inspected the spot with Indian minuteness."

The missionary had frequently to take off his socks and shoes and sling them around his neck when crossing swamps and marshy places. These excursions, which were frequent, gave considerable trouble to his tender feet, and sometimes he suffered intensely from "ground itch," *i.e.*, blains and blisters which form on or around the toes, and sometimes break.

"They arise chiefly from walking on hot sandy soil, after wading through swamps, at a time when your blood is affected by the rising temperature of the hot season of the year. You ought then to rest; but if obliged to move on, you should put on your shoes, first cutting slits or gaps in the upper leathers to ease the pressure. The attack does not last long, unless you manage badly and get an ulcer."

The above is suggestive of a formidable array of dangers and perils, and of insect annoyances. But to Mr. Brett nothing very serious ever happened in consequence. The mission stations have now been so much enlarged and so long occupied that reptiles and wild beasts seldom or ever approach them. The writer, for instance, has never seen such a thing as a snake during four visits paid by him to all the missions in the Pomeroon; and the only inconveniences that he sustained were from mosquitoes, chigoes, and ground itch. No young missionary need, therefore, be frightened by such things as have been related here.

CHAPTER IX.

Mr. Brett ordered Home on Sick Leave—Mr. F. Landroy—Return of Mr. Brett as Rector of Holy Trinity, and Missionary—Mr. M'Clintock.

It will be remembered, as stated above, that in 1847, in consequence of the privations which Mr. Brett had to undergo, as well as from the effects of the miasma arising from the marshy land on which he had lived for upwards of seven years, his health gave way, and he had to remove to the coast, but that he continued to serve the Mission till 1849, when, as he wrote to a friend, "I had to give up and return home, utterly broken down." He was ordered home for absolute rest, the missions being left in charge of catechists. Cabacaburi was confided to the charge of Mr. F. Landroy; but, as the Colonial Legislature, which had hitherto helped in paying the salaries of curates and catechists, had stopped all salaries, Mr. Landroy did not enter on his duties till late in the year 1850. The Mission during all this time was vacant and unvisited, and "Waramuri" in particular was practically abandoned, a Mr. Currie, as has already been stated, having become ill shortly after he was sent there. In June 1851 Mr. Brett returned to the colony, as he himself wrote to a friend, "with strength a little recruited." The Bishop placed him as "officiating minister of the parish of St. Swithin, on the west bank of the Demerara River." After this he was on the point of moving to the east bank of the same river as officiating

minister of the parish of St. Matthew, when it was otherwise willed by the providence of God. The Rev. Charles Haskins, Rector of Holy Trinity, Essequibo, had resigned his living, and no better or more suitable man could be found than the Rev. W. H. Brett to superintend the parish in which his dearly cherished missions were situated. As we have already shown, there is a canal cut through Plantation "Anna Regina," within a mile and a half of Holy Trinity Rectory, by which means it is possible to reach Cabacaburi Mission in about seven hours' paddling.

Although the Mission was fully established, no catechist could ever take the place and do the work of Mr. Brett. Unfortunately no missionary was available, and therefore Mr. Brett could only give to the missions the time which he could spare from his other duties on the coast. His visits were very regularly once a quarter, and lasted for about ten days. But notwithstanding all these drawbacks the blessing of God rested on the missions. The testimony that follows is very remarkable, coming as it does from the Postholder or Protector of the Indians, &c., Mr. W. C. H. M'Clintock. This gentleman had at first not much sympathy with the work of evangelisation; but a letter which was addressed to Lieutenant-Governor Walker by him shows that a change had taken place in his sentiments. This letter was sent in 1853.

"Sir,—I have the honour to state for His Excellency's information that I committed to Capoey Jail this day five Indian men of the Warousi nation, all of whom were connected more or less with the murder of a woman of the same nation, at a place called 'Houhannah,' in Komwatta Creek, in Upper Moruca, one hundred miles from my present

residence, between the hours of eleven and twelve forenoon, of Monday the 12th ultimo. The means used to deprive the poor unprotected female of life were cruel in the extreme. To discharge these Indians without some punishment (confinement) might be attended with consequences serious to themselves as well as to others; at the same time I cannot but remark, that however beneficial prison discipline may prove to the more accomplished and hardened villain, there is nothing so likely to create a change for the better, in the minds of the untutored Indian, and so effectually to keep him from harm's way, if I may so express it, as religious instruction; and being thoroughly convinced of the ultimate success which the adoption of such course would ensure, I must respectfully suggest the re-establishment of Waramuri Mission; and if a fit and proper person be appointed to it, and he becomes acquainted with the Indians entrusted to his care, murders and every description of crime will vanish like a shadow from amongst them.

"The Arawak Indians, who attend the Cabacaburi Mission, Pomeroon, afford the strongest evidence of the correctness of the opinion just offered; for example, when I first arrived in this district, many years before any missionary was appointed to it, a more disorderly people than the *present* Arawaks could not be found in any part of the province; murders and violent cases of assaults were of frequent occurrence. But now the case is reversed—no outrage of any description ever happens; they attend Divine Service, their children are educated, they themselves dress neatly, are lawfully married, and as a body there are no people, in point of general good conduct, to surpass them. This change, which has caused peace and contentment to prevail, was brought about solely through the missionary labour; and why not, may I inquire, extend

similar benefits to the more benighted children of the woods."—I am, &c. &c.,

"W. C. H. F. M'CLINTOCK."

This letter led to the re-establishment of the Waramuri Mission in 1854, after it had been vacant for four years. During Mr. Brett's visit in 1853 we find that he actually collected from the Indians $20 for the newly founded Church Society which was established for Home Missionary work. At this time Mr. Brett wrote that the Mission was in a most "flourishing state;" and of the catechist, Mr. Landroy, he writes—"He has completely gained the confidence of the Indians—a result which it ordinarily takes years fully to attain."

In the old Rectory of Trinity parish, where this Memoir is being written, we came across an old Diary in the handwriting of Mr. Brett, from which we make the following extracts. One item of painful interest is taken from a report supplied by the catechist Landroy, for the quarter ending 30th September 1856:—

"I have nothing favourable to report. The Indians have been visited at their dwellings and Mission with hunger, sickness, measles, and a peculiar and malignant dysentery.

"The Arawaks have suffered much from the latter, one family (including five communicants), consisting of eleven, men, women, and children, died at the residence of the Postholder, Mr. M'Clintock. I regred to add Mrs. M'Clintock has fallen a victim to her noble efforts to save the sufferers.

"Two men came to the Mission with dysentery, but through the blessing of the Lord they are now recovered.

"The Caribs are also suffering. Some of them have gone into the dense forest to escape the disease, and have

cut down large trees to stop others from coming among them.

"The Acawoios are enjoying good health at present. They attend Divine Service and school their children, and have built another house. A few of the Caribs who are near the Mission attend Divine Service, and several adults of this tribe were baptized and married by the Rev. W. H. Brett on his visit, September 2d.

"The severe visitation of sickness, following so quickly on the scarcity of food caused by the drought, has been a most serious drawback, as far as regards our members; though, doubtless, Almighty God will overrule it for good to many souls.

"The death of the poor lady whose labour of mercy I have mentioned is peculiarly distressing to us, though we have in such a case the best of hope through Him who said, 'Blessed are the merciful.'

"Average attendance at church, 92; ditto, Sunday-school, 54; Day School, boys 38, girls 32; total, 70; average, 26."

The year 1857 is thus headed in the Diary:—

"Cholera at the Mission at Cabacaburi February and March 1857."

The first case was that of a boy who was seized with cholera in a corial on the river, and was left by other Indians at the Mission landing-place in the night, he having been a scholar there. The poor boy, finding himself unable to ascend the hill, got into a corial and paddled himself to his settlement, but was seen drifting past Makasina, the Postholder's residence, early next morning. Mr. M'Clintock sent two Caribs with him to the Mission, but they left him at the landing-place again, and fled in terror of the disease. There he remained in an exhausted

state for hours, until he was surrounded by the rising tide. Mrs. Landroy, at length having discovered his position, in the impulse of her feeling, hurried to the spot and brought him to land, and did her best to save him. But her care was too late. He died at 8 P.M. the same day. The next day, Sunday, after Divine Service, the cholera attacked the congregation. The poor boy had been carried to a house by a young canoeist named Daniel, and the wife of Daniel was seized with the fatal sickness, and died in a few hours. Two other young persons next died in the same house. The panic spread, and the Indians immediately fled from the Mission; but there were about five-and-twenty who remained to attend the sick.

In the same year we read in the Guiana Diocesan Church Society's Report as follows, and this will give an idea of the work that was possible to be done by Mr. Brett during one of his quarterly visits:—

"*January 19th.* Left the coast and arrived at the Hill Mission. Found the frame of the chancel erected, but no effort had as yet been made to take down the building at the mouth of the Arapiaco and remove it to the hill. As many Indians were assembled I addressed them, and pointed out the advantage of making a united effort to accomplish the removal the next day. To enable them to do this I postponed the celebration of Divine Service till I should return from Waramuri.

"*Tuesday the 20th.* The Indians, led by our faithful old Cornelius, turned out in great force, and accompanied the carpenter to the old chapel. They worked very hard all day bringing the materials, a distance of a mile, in their small corials to the foot of the hill. Here the women and school-children met them, and carried up all the lighter portions. As the day advanced the scene became more

animated, from the number of people engaged and the corials—many of which had hoisted handkerchiefs for flags—covering the river, each fresh arrival being saluted with joyful acclamations. So heartily did they work that the *whole chapel*, which, with its tower, chancel, and porch, stood intact at 8 A.M., was taken down and carried to the hill ere sunset, leaving a few rotten timbers only, with a few shingles, to be removed the next day.

"In the evening I issued rations of salt fish for the support of the men, who were exhausted by fatigue, but neither that nor any remuneration had been asked for or expected by them. The Day School was examined by me; 22 children present; many reading well.

"*Waramuri Mission, Friday the 23d.*

"Married two couples after early morning prayers. Very unwell all day with cold and low fever.

"*Saturday the 24th.* Indians present at morning service, 70; in the evening, 79. Inspected the Day School; present, 46, including five adults. The register shows on the books 41 boys, 34 girls, besides several adults. Average for last quarter, 34. The school is in good order, and Mr. Campbell evidently takes great pains.

"*Sunday, 25th.* Early Sabbath-school, 76 attended. Full morning service; present, 140. Administered the Holy Communion to 8, including 4 Arawâks and the Carib captain, Peter, and his wife. Evening service, about 100 present.

"*Wednesday the 29th.* The Hill. Found that the Indians had not been idle during my absence, but while the carpenters were flooring and boarding the sides of the chancel they had put on a troolie roof as a protection against sun and rain. The roof, of course, was only intended for that special occasion, and would give place to one of shingles;

but the good feeling and willing mind displayed in their act were such as to call forth my admiration and thanks. The congregation this day was 184; communicants, 48; baptisms, 14. I never saw the Mission in a better state, notwithstanding the recent mortality among our converts and the illness of poor Mr. Landroy. Miss Reid is labouring very diligently in the school, and every effort is being made by the family to keep two missions up, the result being as above stated. I cannot conclude this report without especial notice of the conduct of Cornelius, the Arawâk captain. Every person praised his disinterested efforts to set forward the building. The carpenters assured me that if any of the timber furnished by the Indians was found to be unsuitable Cornelius immediately and quietly set about cutting fresh and proper materials in addition to his own quota, lest there should be any dispute or delay in the work. I am sorry to say I have left him at present in much grief, having told the people that my funds will not allow me to get other than a troolie roof at present for the remaining portion or nave of the building. This Cornelius considers a disgrace to a building erected for the worship of God. He sat in the chapel, holding a long and anxious consultation with his tribe by moonlight, on the last evening of my visit, and sent to ask if I could manage to pay for the lathes and putting them on, if they furnished the shingles. I could not promise this, as the grant from the Guiana Diocesan Church Society will not go any further than I have already engaged; but I should not wonder if the old man, in his zeal, should cut the shingles himself, and then make another appeal. From my knowledge of his character, I feel assured that he will make every exertion to complete this work suitably, for his heart, like David's, is set upon building a fit house for the worship of God."

Mr. Brett had the pleasure of seeing the chapel completed by Easter, owing to the great zeal of Cornelius, and a special grant of $80 made by the Governor of the colony.

The work continued to progress, and in 1861 Mr. Brett was able to report that he had baptized 577 Indians at Cabacaburi, and about 100 at the parish church of the Holy Trinity, *i.e.*, more than one-half of the population living along that river and neighbouring creeks.

We find nothing worthy chronicling until we reach 1864. The gospel news appears by this time to have reached the wild tribes of the far interior, and in that year there was a great migration thence to the Pomeroon and Moruca Missions. In August 1864 Mr. Brett writes:—

"The great point of interest in these missions at present is the extraordinary ingathering of the Acawoios. Until a comparatively recent period there were none of this tribe living near our stations. Then a few families of that tribe came from a long distance to Cabacaburi, and asked to be taught. They were received with distrust and fear, on account of the evil reputation borne by the tribe as '*kenaima*,' or night murderers and poisoners, for which there has been in some instances but too good foundation."

The Acawoios were much to be desired, because their tongue stands in the same relation as French in Europe, and they are what may be termed the peddlers and news-carriers of the whole of the interior. As it will presently be seen, they have actually proved the greatest disseminators of the truth of the gospel. The Waraus were still a source of trouble, they maintaining their ancient character of being "supreme in misery."

Aricunas and *Maiongkongs* began about this time to visit the missions. In November 1865 Mr. Brett writes:—"These

wild-looking people manifested the greatest desire to learn, and through the *medium of our Acawoios*, who can easily communicate with them, we trust that some permanent good may have been imparted;" and as the sequel will show, the good was permanent. We find that at the Bishop's visitation in the same year he actually saw at the two missions about 1600 souls.

CHAPTER X.

The Tumulus at Waramuri—Cannibalism—Governor Hincks' Visit—Famine—The Death of Cornelius—Progress of the Missions from 1869-1874—*The Rev. Walter Heard.*

ANTHROPOLOGICAL science is greatly indebted to Mr. Brett. Within a stone's-throw of Waramuri Mission Church there may be seen a mound of considerable size, about 25 feet in height, and with a diameter of about 130 feet. It was evident to Mr. Brett that this was not a natural hillock, but one of human construction. About this time it appears that his attention was being drawn to the "kitchen-middens" that were discovered in Denmark and elsewhere, and this threw for him some light upon the origin of that mound. So Mr. Brett determined to cut through it. In so doing he found the mass of the tumulus to be composed of fish-bones and shells of various kinds, with the fragmentary bones of quadrupeds and birds, along with other substances, chiefly relics of meals which had been consumed many ages before.

"Among these were the bones of men, women, and children, with their skulls all broken and the long bones split open. 'This,' our people said, 'was done by a man-eating race who, in ancient days, lived there; and they did it to *get at the marrow*.'

"The human relics, old stone axes, &c., found therein were removed for scientific investigation."

FLOATING WARRIOR CRAFTS. P. 104.

A similar mound was discovered close to the Mission dwellings at Cabacaburi. How wonderful that on those very spots where those cruel sacrifices or horrid meals were wont to take place now the

> "Sweet name of Jesus
> Sounds in the believer's ears!"

Other mounds were soon after found by Mr. Brett—five in all—whilst other discoverers have brought the number up to eight. One measured by the Rev. W. Heard is situated at Sireeki, and is 250 feet long by 90 feet wide, and between 20 and 25 feet high. It is oblong in shape.

Mr. Im. Thurn, who has studied the subject as only a scientific man can study it, has come to the conclusion that these mounds "all occur about the Pomeroon, and northward from that to the Orinoco; that they consist mainly of shells of one species (*Neritina Lineolata*), arranged in layers, the upper surface of each of which has been hardened, apparently by the action of fire; that a few other shells are included, and especially of an oyster, which occurs more and more abundantly in the mounds the nearer these are to the Orinoco; that stone implements occur comparatively in abundance, but that domestic implements, including pottery, and body ornaments are almost entirely absent; that remains of mammals occur, but in strikingly less quantity than relics of mollusc fish; and that human bones occur in a condition which clearly indicates cannibalism." From these facts Mr. Im. Thurn concludes that these mounds "(1) were made not by the resident inhabitants of the country, but by strangers; (2) that these strangers came from the sea and not from farther inland; (3) and that these strangers were certain island

Caribs, who afterwards took tribal form in Guiana as the so-called Caribisi, or true Caribs." *

The discovery of the Waramuri shell-mound, as well as a desire to see the Mission, induced His Excellency Governor Hincks to visit the Mission at Waramuri. This visit took place in February 1866. It is thus described by Mr. Brett :—

"The Governor, accompanied by the Bishop and a party of gentlemen, left Georgetown by sea for the mouth of the Moruca; and the next day they were conveyed by Mr. M'Clintock in bateaux and canoes, and attended by a large Indian flotilla to the Mission. There they were received by the Archdeacon, Mr. Campbell, and myself, and welcomed by a *feu de joie* and loud cheers from a far greater number of Indians than had been seen together in those countries during the present century. The school-children, bearing banners, and having their ranks lengthened by a great number of little naked Warau and Caribi recruits, lined one side of the wide path, with the men ranged behind them; while the women and infants occupied the other side. The Governor and three gentlemen of his suite appeared in full uniform, a circumstance which gave immense delight to the assembled multitude.

"After an interval of rest during the noon-tide heat the Indians again assembled on the plain before the new chapel. The pressing forward of all, men, women, and children, to shake hands was now resumed with increased vigour, and endured with much patience by the Governor, who afterwards expressed, in a few words, his pleasure at meeting such numbers of the various tribes as were there assembled. He also announced his wish to explore the mound still

* Im. Thurn's "Among the Indians of Guiana," p. 420.

further. To this the chiefs assented, as the work was to be done by black men brought for the purpose. As no tribe knew anything of the origin of the mound, or would own affinity with the people whose bones were there found, none cared particularly about their being disinterred for examination, if the risk of offending their manes were incurred by *strangers, not by themselves.*

"The next day there was a distribution of presents which the Governor had brought. In the evening games of archery and foot-races among the school-children took place. Some wild-looking Waraus then brought forward their *isahi*, or decorated shields, and engaged in friendly contests with each other for the entertainment of the visitors. Many severe struggles took place, in some of which the unsuccessful Indian rolled on the sand, one champion, by a peculiar and dexterous manœuvre, overturning three antagonists in succession.

"The total number of Indians present was about 2000. About 250 more were on their way from Barima, but being too late, turned back again.

"The unusual excitement of the day was followed by the calm quiet of a glorious moonlight night, the stillness of which was broken by the low hum of voices from the multitude housed or encamped over hundreds of fires around, and by the occasional sound of a hymn sung by our Christian Acawoios, who, with their usual perseverance, were holding one of their religious meetings for the instruction of their wilder brethren.

"On the morning of the third day the Governor and his suite departed."

The following is taken from a more particular account of the Governor's visit by the Hon. J. L. Smith :—

"In the evening the sound of singing was heard from

the Acawoio quarter, and on proceeding thither silently an interesting scene presented itself. The house was crowded with Acawoios, and a number of young Indians of both sexes, who had been taught at the missions, were singing, 'Angels from the realms of glory,' a most intelligent young Acawoio, named Philip (Capui), giving out each verse of the hymn. Then he took up his Bible and began to read from the seventh chapter of Matthew, interpreting each verse as he went along to his countrymen in their own language. With much fervour he read to them: 'What man is there of you, whom if his son ask bread, will he give him a stone? Or if he ask a fish, will he give him a serpent? If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, *how much more* shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask Him?' The affection of the Indians for their children is extreme, and the appeal seemed to come home to their hearts with extraordinary force. Earnest murmurs of assent showed how deep an impression this passage had made upon them, and that it had sunk into their minds with all the freshness and power of a new idea, and Philip enlarged upon the theme with a sincerity which evidently had a great effect upon his audience."

Is it any wonder that the missionary's heart overflows? He says:—

"How great the difference between the scenes which must have occurred during the construction of Waramuri tumulus and that which took place after its excavation! In the evening of the day following the completion of the latter work the Indian congregation, neatly dressed, went in procession, with their pastor and teacher, from the chapel to the mound, and ranged around and over it, the various tribes joined us in singing the glorious hymn—

'Jesus shall reign where'er the sun
Doth his successive journeys run,' &c.,

while the Lamb, the Dove, and other Christian emblems and inscriptions on the banners borne by the school-children waved over the yawning cavity which had disclosed to us such relics of barbarous days.

'In the region and shadow of death light is sprung up.'"

Later on in the same year the Indians suffered very greatly from famine, in consequence of the continued rain which had fallen during the previous year, as the Indians were thus prevented from burning their fields previous to planting them, and also because the cassava and other root-crops which were at the time in the earth rotted. Still, notwithstanding this, seventy-eight baptisms are recorded, two-thirds of which were adults.

In the years 1867–1868 Mr. Brett went home for a change, and the missions were left in charge of the Rev. C. Morgan, who, Mr. Brett reports, did his work "with zeal and ability." In 1868, 109 baptisms are recorded at Waramuri alone.

During this year old Cornelius, the Arawâk, the first Indian convert, was called to his rest. He had worked for God for twenty-eight years. Mr. Brett felt the blow intensely. He thus writes to the Venerable Archdeacon Jones, the Secretary of the Church Society:—

"His early labours for Christ I need not mention, as they are known unto many. Looked up to as a Christian example by the Indians of other tribes as well as of his own, and equally respected by the settlers, he had seen all our early converts drop into the grave, and at length remained the sole link between them and the present generation.

"Of late years he had felt the effects of old age and become very feeble, though he still continued to act as

Warden of the Mission Chapel. When I left for England he made me a last and most affectionate adieu, saying, 'My eyes will no more see your face in this world!' One Sunday morning in February last he sent word to the Mission teachers that he was too weak to come to Divine Service, but that they were to expect him on the following Wednesday. On that Wednesday his remains were brought for interment by his sons. His dying exhortation to these young men—'to do all in their power for the prosperity of the missions and the house of God, and to do it of a willing heart'—showed that the spirit which had animated him during so many years of his life had been equally strong in the hour of death."

The death of Cornelius was followed by another great loss in 1869. Mr. D. Campbell, the excellent catechist stationed at Waramuri, died; and it was not till August 1871 that Mr. Griffiths was appointed to take the charge of the orphaned Mission. This same year the Bishop met 1200 Indians at the different stations, seventy-one of whom he confirmed.

In the year 1872 we find Mr. Brett still as anxious as ever to extend the Kingdom of Christ in these parts; and so, accompanied by the Bishop, whom neither fatigue nor age seems ever to tire, he proceeded to other rivers—notably the Waiini, towards the mouth of the Orinoco—to see whether another mission might not yet be started amongst the Caribs of the river Barahma; but no mission could be started then.

In 1874 Mr. Brett gave the results of the census taken in 1871 to show that the Indians were not being exterminated by coming in contact with civilisation. Thus in the river Pomeroon in 1851 there were 977 Indians, whilst in 1871 the number had risen to 1420. Up to June 1874

there had been baptized by Mr. Brett and others 2299 Indians !

Soon after this date Mr. Brett obtained leave of absence, and went home for the benefit of his shattered health. During his absence the charge of the missions devolved upon the late Rev. G. M. Woodhouse, colonial curate of St. Bartholomew's, and acting rector of Holy Trinity Church. Mr. Woodhouse, after his first visit, came to the conclusion that the congregation at each of the stations was so perfect, and the plan of superintendence so simple, and yet so good, that the management of these missions bade fair to be the most pleasant part of his duty during the rector's absence. The schools were then progressing favourably. At his visit he found 41 children at Cabacaburi, and 108 at Waramuri. The services which were held at Waramuri were well attended, the church, as usual, being more than crowded, and Mr. Woodhouse called these missions "a wonderful success."

The following year Mr. Brett returned to the colony, and he visited the missions in October, not with the idea of resuming his work, but for the purpose of introducing the Rev. W. Heard, who had volunteered for service in that district, and whose salary was benevolently supplied by the colony. Mr. Heard, who had already seen work amongst the aborigines of the Corentyne river, threw his whole soul into the work; indeed a better appointment could not have been made.

"During the visit just referred to Mr. Brett baptized 77 adults and Mr. Heard 77 infants at Waramuri alone. The adults had been receiving instruction from "the hard-working catechist, Mr. Adams." At Cabacaburi 31 Indians were admitted into the Church through the waters of baptism. Mr. Brett writes :—"Mr. Heard was most heartily

welcomed by the people at every station. He has gone with his family to reside at Cabacaburi. This will be his headquarters, and from thence he will itinerate to the other stations. It is no small comfort to me to give over the immediate charge of those important missions to one who evidently loves the race. He will chiefly have to labour amongst them; and should I be spared to visit them from time to time, I trust to see abundant fruits from his labour there, through Him who alone 'giveth the increase.'"

CHAPTER XI.

Hackney—Mr. Duncan Campbell—Brett as a "Disciplinarian"—Present State of Hackney—Holy Trinity Parish—Creole Work—Work among the Chinese—Work among the Coolies—A Black Linguist—Great Gathering of Coolies—A Coolie Catechist—Rev. S. C. Hore—Present State of Coolie Work in the Parish—General Statistics.

In the preceding pages the name of "Hackney" is mentioned. In this chapter, which we intend to devote to the work of Mr. Brett amongst the Creoles, the East Indians, and the Chinese, we must begin with his work among the Creoles of Hackney. This place is situated on the Lower Pomeroon, just between the two Indian stations of Cabacaburi and Waramuri. The church at Hackney is dedicated to St. Mary. We take the following from the Diary before referred to :—

"The establishment of the church in this district is due to the labours of Rev. J. H. Duke, who, amidst his arduous duties on the coast, found time occasionally to visit the river Pomeroon. As a matter of fact, of course, the negro apprenticed labourers on the estates in that district engaged his attention first of all; for though the aborigines, at that time quite heathen and uncivilised, excited his commiseration, no opening appeared for a mission to them until the visit of Bishop Coleridge in 1839; while the negroes were perfectly accessible, and, like all their race at that period, extremely anxious to be instructed, baptized, and married. Mr. Duke accordingly resolved to place a catechist in their

district, and fitted up a small house for his residence and as a place of instruction. The catechists in this district previous to my arrival were :—

"W. Bunn (afterwards Rev. W. Bunn, who died at St. Lawrence's Chapelry, October 1846).

"J. Semper (who returned to Trinidad).

"F. Landroy (who removed to St John's parish, and in 1850 became catechist to the upper district).

"In 1840, the year of my arrival in the river, the station was vacant.

"The building which Mr. Duke had fitted up (then abandoned) was rapidly falling. I visited it in 1841, and found it a small place of three storeys, of which the middle was pewed off, and had evidently been the chapel school."

As we have already seen, Mr. Smithet became a catechist to help Mr. Brett in this special work. He was succeeded by Mr. Duncan Campbell. In 1850, as all salaries were stopped, Mr. Campbell was compelled to become a planter in the neighbourhood.

"Notwithstanding (to his credit be it recorded) he continued to read prayers, teach Sunday-school, and perform all the Sabbath duties as before, without remuneration."

This Mission underwent several vicissitudes, but on the whole it was successful. Under date January 1858 Mr. Brett writes :—"I performed Divine Service at Hackney. Baptisms (infants), 4; marriage, 1; communicants, 39. After service I called the attention of the people—

"1st. To the condition of the chapel, which was sinking on one side, the ground sill being rotten. This damage I requested the Hackney people to repair.

"2d. I set before them their desolate condition in having no resident teacher, being solely dependent for instructions on my visits at distant intervals, and begged them to

subscribe funds to aid in erecting a cottage for a schoolmaster, towards which $50 had been conditionally granted by the Guiana Diocesan Church Society. Both these they promised to do."

That Mr. Brett was a disciplinarian as well as a man of his word the following extract will show. It is under date 21st of April 1858:—

"*April 21st.* I landed at Hackney at 5 P.M. to see if the chapel had been made safe for Divine Service on the morrow. Found that no attempt had been made to renew the blocks and rotten sills, though I had directed it to be done at my last visit, and Mr. Campbell had since offered to pay for the work.

"In consequence of this gross neglect I declared to the Hackney people my determination not to perform any religious service in that building till it should be made safe and decent, and forthwith sent word to the neighbouring estates that there would be no service next day. I then went to lodge at Caledonia.

"*April 22d.* Two couples who were to have been married this day came to me at Caledonia in great distress. I offered to marry them at Waramuri, but rigidly refused to perform any service at Hackney, in the existing condition of the chapel.

"At 3 P.M. I started for Waramuri in company with Mr. Campbell. I left the district in a state of great excitement, but apparently their murmurings were directed at the Hackney people, and my decision, though severe, was regarded as necessary and wholesome. The two couples were married next day at Waramuri.

"*April 26th.*—Returned to Caledonia, and was glad to hear that the chapel had been blocked up and made safe temporarily.

"27*th*.—Divine Service; congregation, 150; communicants, 23; offertory, $1 76c.; 1 baptism.

"After service I saw the chief men of the district, and told them that the chapel must have new squared blocks of Mora all round, and that the wood-ants must be exterminated. I recommended them to impose a day's labour or a day's pay on every man in the district, and held out for their imitation the example set by the Indians at the hill in removing the old chapel, and gratuitously supplying materials for the new.

"Left in the afternoon for the hill Mission, being very unwell with severe fever."

This mission-station has been daily growing in importance, owing to the steady settlement of Creoles and East Indians on the river, and during the tenure of office by the Rev. W. Heard a beautiful church has been built. To see this church, with its well-appointed chancel, a cassocked and surpliced choir of really earnest Churchmen, and a most attentive congregation, is a sight to cheer the hearts of the most desponding.

With reference to what we may call the parochial work of the Rev. W. H. Brett, it may be said that everything that was done was done thoroughly and with the utmost regularity. The parish of Holy Trinity proper is about fifteen miles in length, although it extends to thousands of square miles. The parish boundaries are the Capoi Creek on the south, and it extends as far as the British possessions reach. The boundary of the colony on the side bordering on Venezuela is not as yet defined. The population consists of about 14,000, which may be roughly divided into two great nationalities, the Creoles or English-speaking people, chiefly descendants of the Old African slaves, and Asiatics, chiefly East Indians, with a sprinkling

of Chinese. There are also a few European families, which may be counted on one's fingers.

When Mr. Brett arrived he found four churches, and to his regret he had to abandon one of them, the little church of St. Barnabas at "Exmouth," at the extreme north end of the parish. This step he considered necessary for two reasons—first, because the people had left the neighbourhood, and the wood-ants were devouring the building; and second, because his health did not permit him to undertake the charge of this station. A new church to replace this was built by the present rector in 1886 about two miles beyond the former situation, in the midst of a population of some 400 people.

Mr. Brett confined his work to the parish church, dedicated to the Holy Trinity, a very ugly building, which was added to at various times, with galleries that were a cause of constant concern to him and his vestry. The building has since been abandoned, and a very handsome church has been built in 1886. Mr. Brett had also the charge of a chapel school, dedicated to St. Lawrence at Hampton Court. The other church in the parish, dedicated to St. Saviour, was served by a curate. The services which were carried on by Mr. Brett for his English-speaking people were as follows :—

Every Sunday between 10 and 11 A.M. catechising and instructing chiefly the old people. Matins at eleven o'clock, and according to the ideas that prevailed in days gone by, the Holy Communion was administered after the eleven o'clock service on the first Sunday in the month. At three o'clock in the afternoon the chapel school was served in the same manner. There was also one week-day service at each church. There were four schools in the parish, supervised by the rector. He visited and taught the children in them

with the utmost regularity. In addition to this he did all the usual work of an English parish priest. He was also president of the Board of Guardians, and had to administer the colonial funds for the maintenance of the poor of all denominations throughout the extensive parish.

When Mr. Brett first took over the parish there were a few coolies and Chinese, who went on continually increasing, until now they form just one-half of the population. His missionary zeal led him to view the prospect with dismay. There were thousands in his parish speaking many languages for whom he felt he could do nothing. He began to study the situation, and he found it very embarrassing, the Chinese for one thing being a language that one must learn from youth, whilst the tongues spoken by the other nations were also difficult to acquire. Writing to a friend, he says that "the difficulties consist in the Babel-like variety of tongues. It is that diversity which has rendered us all but powerless; but people in England hearing of Hindoo coolies here think all are of one speech."

In 1870 Mr. Brett succeeded in obtaining the services of a Chinese catechist, Chun-an-Sing, and in six years 44 adults and 10 children were admitted into the ark of Christ's Church through baptism. This work gave great pleasure to the missionary, as the Chinese, when they have once learned Christ, make model Christians. Writing to the Church Society under date December 31, 1877, he says:—"The number of Chinese adults and children baptized (24 in 1877) would have raised our total number of resident converts to one hundred or more, were the increase not checked continually by their emigration to other parts of the colony." The first Chinese catechist was drowned, and Peter Wong-ah-po, an excellent man, speaking English fairly well, was appointed. Peter, who is still in charge of

the Mission, is a martyr to rheumatism; otherwise he does all that can be expected of him. Very few Chinese are now left in the parish, and these few are nearly all Christians. On the first of January 1887 there were on our books 74 Chinese Christians, 26 of whom were communicants. It should be here stated that when money was being collected for the building of the new parish church in Holy Trinity parish the Chinese gave most handsomely; several gave $5 (20s. 10d.) each, others gave as much as $15, and every year they contribute to the general funds of the church, as well as to special missionary objects. Friends in England will be gratified to hear that the archiepiscopal cross presented lately to Archbishop Benson was not given by Englishmen alone, but that some of the Christian coolies and Chinese in British Guiana were among the subscribers.

The work of Mr. Brett amongst the coolies, although of little importance, proved very interesting. Whilst he was engaged in looking for a suitable catechist a young black carpenter, residing in a village in the parish of Holy Trinity called Daniel's Town, presented himself one day to Mr. Brett and asked him for books in the Nâgari character, to enable him to teach some of his coolie friends. "Surprised at this," Mr. Brett writes, "I tested his knowledge by means of my Hindostani Testament in Anglo-Roman, and he seemed well up in the tongue; telling me also with much correctness the words (compounds of Allah, &c., from the Arabic) which the Hindoos do not use—only the Mussulmans. He seemed just as well up in Tamil, reading off the Creed, the Lord's Prayer, &c., while I checked him from the Tamil Prayer-book in Anglo-Roman. Finally, he knew a good deal of Chinese, in more than one dialect, and had learnt the Greek alphabet and tried the Hebrew one." This black Mezzofanti was a phenomenon which Mr. Brett

carefully watched. To begin with, he was not a Churchman; and although Mr. Brett was much taken with him, yet he never employed him. He wrote to a friend—who was also much impressed with this brilliant genius—that "we have been unable to utilise the talents of this man on account of his moral irregularities."

The next thing Mr. Brett did was very wise. He selected what appeared to him a suitable young man, a Madras coolie, and sent him for a three years' training to a little college which the Bishop had been instrumental in establishing at Plantation Bel Air, in the neighbourhood of the chief city, Georgetown, doing in the meantime what he could himself. In 1876 the Rev. S. Coode Hore, the missionary in charge of the "Belair" Mission School, spent a few days in Trinity parish, and Mr. Brett invited him to address the coolies in his parish church. This was done, and on one occasion 635 adults and 73 children were gathered together to hear him. On another occasion Mr. Hore addressed 300 coolies from the manager's house at La Belle Alliance. Thus the work was kept going. About this time Mr. Brett writes :—"There is now a greater desire among all other classes in my parish for their conversion than I ever knew before, and something like *volunteer* efforts I have lately seen among *themselves*. One young man, converted by reading some Christian tracts and one of the gospels in Devanagari characters, has been baptized; and judging from his heathen brethren, whom he brings to Divine worship, will shortly be, under God, the means of bringing others to the Saviour's fold." Later on Mr. Brett reported progress :—"The number of our Hindoo worshippers (catechumens, in truth, *without a trained* and duly authorised *catechist*) is still increasing."

In August 1878 the young man who had been sent to

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Belair to be trained was considered fit to take the supervision of the coolie work. Although he hailed from Madras, and his native tongue, therefore, was Tamil, yet he was able to speak, read, and write Hindi. After four months' work Mr. Brett wrote to the Church Society in December 1878 :— "He has done his work very well; and though he has only been here four months, it is beginning to tell. Among our inquirers is a Hindu priest, an elderly man, who came to witness the baptism of a convert a few days ago. I saw him at church on the day of intercession, and two days after found him at school, among the little coolies, learning to spell in English. A copy in excellent text-hand, written on a slate, shows that he must also have paid attention to writing for some time past—a sign of the times. Visiting the estates' hospital forms a regular part of our catechists' work, and their visits there are well received by the sick coolies."

This is the last report written by Mr. Brett. In 1879 the veteran missionary retired on superannuation, and His Excellency the Governor, at the recommendation of the Bishop of Guiana, appointed the Rev. S. C. Hore, the coolie missionary, to the Rectory of Holy Trinity. The heart of the infirm pastor was gladdened at the thought that at last his long-cherished design of establishing a mission among the coolies, who by this time numbered upwards of 6000, would be carried into effect.

The newly appointed rector started a Hindi service on every Sunday afternoon, which was well attended. But, strange to say, the work received a check instead of an impetus. The catechist's mind became unhinged, the rector suffered from bad health, and in 1883 he resigned the benefice, and the few coolie Christians were scattered.

In 1884 the present rector was appointed. He also

knew something of the languages of the coolies, and started a regular mission amongst them. In 1884 he succeeded in obtaining the services of a catechist, who, however, knew very little, and the rector himself began preaching on the estates. The young man who assisted the rector—a coolie baptized by himself—was sent to the mission-house at Belair for further training, and he is still there. Another catechist was in the meantime appointed, a man brought up in India, very earnest and, as far as man can judge, sincere. He has some ability, and in comparison with our coolies, a man of superior scholarship. In 1887 the rector was enabled to secure the services of another catechist, trained at the Belair institution. As he has been a very short time in the parish it is too early to speak of him. He appears earnest and sincere.

For coolie mission-work the parish has been divided into two districts. The upper district, consisting of two large blocks of estates, with its centre at Taymouth Manor, where the catechist resides ; the other, with two large estates, having its centre at Anna Regina, the catechist residing at the Rectory.

An idea of the present state of this Mission may be gathered from the following figures, showing the work done during 1886. There were held, specially for the coolies and Chinese, in churches, hospitals, and estates' yards (usually in the open air), by the rector and his catechists 555 services, and the number of persons addressed was 10,918. On the 1st of January 1887 there were 81 coolie and 74 Chinese Christians, 26 and 13 of them, respectively, being communicants. Nine adults were baptized during the year. Besides these there were 28 coolies in course of instruction, and the number is increasing daily. The parish has numerous schools, all of which

are attended, more or less, by coolie children. It is believed that at no time have the prospects of the Kingdom of God been better in these parts than they are at the present moment; and we feel sure that if departed saints are permitted to see what is going on from their resting-place, our venerated founder of the Mission would rejoice at the present prospect of the work.

We will conclude this chapter by giving a few statistics connected with the "Creole" work of the parish. At the parish church during 1886 there were held 459 services, the Holy Communion being celebrated 84 times, and 3517 communions were made. There were baptized 30 legitimate children and 65 illegitimate, the number of legitimate being the highest known. There were married 26 couples, the number of marriages having increased 100 per cent. during the last three years. The number of confirmations in the parish for the same year was, males 51, females 47 = 98. The Holy Communion for the sick was administered in 25 different houses to 140 sick persons and friends. The offertories alone for the same year amounted to $1,021 57c.—the highest known. The same may be said of all the other churches and chapel schools in the parish. The work so well begun by that good and faithful servant, Mr. Brett, has been going forward and not back. There is a communicant roll of some 800 people, which testifies that there must be earnestness. The system of tickets for the communicants, adopted in nearly all parishes in the diocese, is so stringent, that any one who lives disorderly is pretty certainly debarred from approaching the Holy Altar. There is still a great blot in the parish and in the whole diocese concerning illegitimacy; but faithful work must improve our people. We must do our best and leave to God the rest.

CHAPTER XII.

The Bishop's Opinion of Brett's Work—S. P. G.—A Coincidence—Appointed Chaplain—B.D.—Presentation by the County of Essequibo in 1874—*Clerical Assessor—Presentation by the Clergy in* 1879—*Same by the Laity—Address from "Anna Regina" School.*

It will hardly be necessary to state that the long and unwearied exertions of Mr. Brett were not left unnoticed by the Bishop, the clergy, and the faithful laity. It is well known that every one respected him, and that many resorted to him for advice. We have it on good authority that many vexed questions on church policy and other matters were submitted by the Bishop to his judgment—the judgment of one whom he fully appreciated and greatly loved. We shall quote some of the remarks that were made in public by the Bishop concerning him.

In one of the charges to the clergy of the diocese the Bishop thus spake :—

"Considering the serious disadvantages which the stations, with one exception, in connection with the S. P. G. have laboured under, in having been for so considerable a period almost unattended to by any clergyman, and the total abandonment of one of the most promising of their missions, through the serious illnesses of those who had the early charge of it, I was glad to find so little to cause feelings of despondency; and it was no insignificant proof, if such were wanting, of the faithfulness with which the gospel

of Jesus Christ has been preached amongst the aborigines in the extreme northern boundary of the colony.

"Nor can I forbear to mention the important event of the translation of two of the gospels into one of the Indian languages. I shall never forget the impression conveyed to my mind when I beheld the unaffected and, I believe that I may add, holy joy which lighted up the countenances of these simple and interesting people when they beheld with their own eyes and handled with their own hands the precious Message in their own language. I could realise to my mind through what I saw the feelings which must have overspread the countenances of the early Christians when they met together to read an Epistle from one of the apostles.

"Great indeed has been the satisfaction of my rev. brother, lately a missionary in connection with the S. P. G., when he witnessed the realisation of his toilsome and anxious work; and yet must it in truth have been a labour of love, in behalf of a long-neglected tribe of the early possessors of this soil.

"I have no doubt that this good work will present another great advantage. Roving as do our Indians from place to place, and carrying with them one of these blessed volumes, they will be as so many heralds of salvation.

"May the knowledge of these facts stimulate us all to greater exertions on behalf of all the heathen nations who are already in our land, and who are likely to congregate in much larger numbers. As they seek a resting-place here in quest of earthly gain, may they find the true El Dorado, and in faith look unto 'the city that had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it; for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof.'" *

And later his lordship, having requested Mr. Brett to

* Bishop's Charge, 1851, p. 30.

preach a sermon on behalf of the missions of the Church, delivered on the same day a charge, in which he said :—

"The missionary outposts of the colony continue to be an inexpressible source of comfort to me. Well indeed may our rev. brother, who has this morning so ably instructed us in our duties and obligations, as he is entitled to do, take courage in the future prosecution of a work in which he occupies a foremost place! Well may he take courage, and raise the notes of joy only fit for so solemn realities, 'Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will towards men!' I had lately the privilege of witnessing with him at the station in the Pomeroon the greatly increasing association of tribes who formerly punished each other with rancorous hatred, and even one time, until they became Christians, were estranged from each other, but are now united in peace and love. At the Moruca Station, too, there is everything to encourage us to lend a helping hand."

Thirteen years later the Bishop thus spoke :—

"Foremost amongst the points of interest which arrested my attention I may place our mission-fields. Never during my experience has there been such a promising harvest as they now present; never before, as I believe, have there appeared such signal marks of the triumphs of the gospel of Christ. It was no gathering only for the day when some 2000, composed of five distinct tribes, assembled together to meet the chief ruler of this colony at our most distant northern outpost about two years ago. Steadily were the heathen flocking in before that time; steadily have they been coming to us since that day—a day which will doubtless long be remembered by these simple and interesting races for a gracious act of condescension and kind consideration.

"I cannot more clearly demonstrate what I affirm than by mentioning a fact which was communicated to me a little more than two weeks ago by the worthy catechist at the Waramuri Mission—that some 60 persons, adults and children, were waiting at that time to be baptized, and 16 couples to be married, at the approaching visit of the superintending clergyman." *

Besides the above loving words of the Bishop in his public charges, there are to be found many other allusions to this truly great missionary in almost every report of the venerable Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in foreign parts—a Society that has nursed the mission-work of the Church in the diocese of Guiana for the last fifty years, and is still helping the diocese by a grant of £800 per annum. In giving a review of the work of the diocese in a report supplied by the Bishop to the above-named Society in 1881 his lordship thus wrote:—"Mr. Brett was rewarded by seeing the ferocious Caribs, the gentle Arawâks, and the homicidal Acawoios dwelling together in harmony and kneeling down side by side in their house of prayer without terror or even suspicion: an all but literal fulfilment this of Isaiah's prophecy, 'The wolf shall lie down with the lamb.'"

Of Mr. Brett's linguistic attainments the Bishop thus wrote in the same report:—"There can be very little doubt that the extension of Christianity among the aboriginal Indians has been powerfully promoted by the circulation of cards containing the Lord's Prayer, the Apostles' Creed, and some elements of Christian truth printed by the S.P.C.K., and illustrated with vignettes depicting some of the striking events recorded in the Bible." And once more, in the same

* The Bishop's Charge, 1855.

report, he adds:—"However, when we cast a retrospective glance over the interval that separates us from the time when William Henry Brett (*clarum et venerabile nomen*) arrived in the colony we may well say, 'What hath God wrought!'" *

The members of the venerable Society above alluded to, having heard of the death of the subject of our Memoir, thus record their estimate of his work in the report of 1885: —"He may be declared without exaggeration to have been the means under God of converting four nations who, in their pagan state, lived in perpetual warfare among themselves."

The Bishop, it should be mentioned, showed the appreciation of his labours by nominating him as his chaplain in January 1870, an appointment which (at the Bishop's request, when he left the diocese) he retained until his death, and of which he was justly proud, always regarding it as an especial mark of the Bishop's affection and esteem.

In 1878, at the request of the Bishop of Guiana, His Grace the Archbishop of Canterbury (the late Dr. Tait) conferred on Mr. Brett the degree of "B.D." in recognition of his scholastic attainments and long and eminent services as a missionary.

The laity evinced their appreciation of his great merits, and showed him every attention and all respect and honour. Thus when Mr. Brett was leaving on a visit to England in 1874 he was presented with a pocket Bible, a loving address, and a purse of money amounting to more than £70, a portion of which, it was stipulated, was to be spent on a silver tea-pot and an engraved inscription.

The address on the occasion was as follows:—

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* The Bishop's Charge, 1868.

"*To the Rev.* W. H. BRETT, *Rector of the Holy Trinity, Essequibo.*

"REV. AND DEAR BROTHER,—We, the undersigned members of the vestry of the parish of the Holy Trinity, in our own names, and on behalf of your parishioners and other friends, have to express sincere regret that you are about to leave us for England after thirty-five years' service in this colony as a missionary and minister of the gospel in connection with the Church of England. Your unwearied exertions, attended with many privations, amongst the Indians cannot be too highly appreciated, and your ministrations in the churches of this parish have been in unison with your exemplary life and conversation.

"As a token of the esteem and love we have for you as a man, as a Christian, and as a minister of the gospel, we beg respectfully to present you with this address, accompanied with a bank order for 350 dollars and a list of the subscribers. These we put into your hands, praying your acceptance of them, with the sincere wish that you may be spared to come back again with body and mind invigorated for the discharge of your arduous and responsible duties; and in bidding you a kind farewell, we remain," &c., &c.

This address was signed by the Sheriff, and other officials of the county, the leading planters, and a great many of his parishioners, including coolies and Chinese, the signatures in all being 119. The clergy also greatly respected him, and they appointed him as their clerical assessor in 1873; and when he retired in 1879 they also presented him with a sum of money for the purchase of a handsome gold watch and chain, and thus affectionately addressed him :—

"*To the Rev.* William Henry Brett, B.D.

"Rev. and dear Brother,—Before you leave the diocese in which you have laboured for nearly forty years we desire to wish you a respectful and affectionate farewell.

"It is not granted to many clergymen in a tropical climate to continue their labours almost uninterruptedly, as you have done, for the long period you have spent in the diocese of Guiana.

"But your ministry, we feel, is not to be noted by the measure of years alone.

"We cannot forget that you were one of the early pioneers of the Cross among the aboriginal inhabitants of the colony, that you dedicated the best years of your early manhood to the work of evangelising the Indians of the Pomeroon and Moruca rivers, exercising your ministry under circumstances that would have driven many even faithful and stout hearts almost to despair. Nor can we omit to place on record our sense of the obligation which the whole diocese is under to you for your translations into several Indian languages of portions of the Bible and Prayer-book, &c. By these your name will be remembered long after those to whom you are personally known shall have passed away.

"The flourishing condition of these missions at the present time is due, under God, to the self-denying energy of their founder. And while we regret exceedingly that you are compelled to resign your position in the diocese in consequence of broken health rather than from the infirmities of age, we feel a pride in testifying that the cause of your ill health can be traced to the exposure and privations to which, as a true missionary of the gospel, you willingly

subjected yourself for so long a period in your Master's cause.

"That you may yet be spared many years to enjoy your well-earned retirement in the mother-land, and that your example may encourage younger men to 'spend and be spent' in the work you leave behind you, is the earnest prayer, rev. and dear brother, of your affectionate friends in Christ."

The laity presented him with a Bible and a Prayer-book and a cheque for $340. On the same occasion addresses were presented to him by the members of the various congregations; but we have room for one only of these, which was sent by one of the schools under his pastoral care—the children of the Anna Regina school. It ran as follows:—

"Reverend Sir,—We have heard with very great grief that you are about to leave us for England, with no probability of your returning to the colony; and we therefore take this opportunity of tendering you our humble thanks for the spiritual care and paternal affection which you have shown us as pupils of Anna Regina School.

"Young as we are, we cannot but reflect upon the tenderness which has always characterised your conduct towards us, and we shall ever remember the kind manner and pleasant humour in which you have imparted to us the most useful and instructive lessons.

"We trust, Sir, that the good impressions you have always endeavoured to make upon our minds whilst catechising and examining us in Scripture lessons will never be effaced, but as we grow older we may, by our 'life and conversation,' show that we benefited by your earnest teachings.

"In conclusion, we wish you, Sir, a safe and pleasant

passage to England, and hope that you may long be spared to enjoy the fruits of your unintermitted and indefatigable labour.

"We beg to be, Rev. Sir,
Your most humble and dutiful servants,"
(Signed by over sixty scholars, Creoles, coolies, and Chinese).

"*July* 16, 1879."

To this Mr. Brett sent the following reply:—

"DEAR YOUNG FRIENDS,—I thank you very much for your kind and loving address to me on the eve of my departure for England.

"There has been no part of my ministerial duties which I have taken greater interest in than the hours spent in imparting religious instruction to the lambs of the flock. I trust that you will profit by the lessons you have received, and by those which I trust you still may have given to you.

"Pray to God to make you good men and women as you grow up and enter into life. In this way you will give comfort and satisfaction to your teacher, your minister, and your parents, and prepare yourselves for the life of the world to come.

"I trust that your master will be able to communicate to me, from time to time, tidings of your progress in all good things, and in knowledge, not only human and worldly, but divine.

"Your faithful pastor,
"W. H. BRETT."

CHAPTER XIII.

Early Missions in Guiana—Rev. T. Youd—The Influence of Mr. Brett's Work in the Diocese—Orealla—The Demerara Missions—The Rev. A. Gwyther—The Essequibo Missions—Ven. Archdeacon Farrar—The Potaro Missions—The Rev. W. E. Pierce—The Rev. F. L. Quick—Mr. Brett's Works—Home Influence—A. S. Brett.

No efforts for the evangelisation of the aborigines in what is now called British Guiana were ever made by the Dutch. During their period of rule, however, the Moravians planted the first Christian mission on the river Berbice, which lasted from 1738 to 1763, when it was destroyed during the insurrection of the negro slaves. The first effort at evangelisation on the part of the Church of England was made in 1829 by the Church Missionary Society, at a place called "Bartica," on the great Essequibo river. Here a mission-station was established by Mr. T. Armstrong. His successor was the Rev. T. Youd, who, however, gave over the charge of the Mission to the Rev. J. H. Bernau, while he himself commenced another mission in the far-distant interior, on the shore of the lake Amuku, on the upper part of the Rupununi, from which post he was afterwards driven by the Brazilian soldiers. During his labours here Mr. Youd lost home, children, and wife—the latter being poisoned by an Indian sorceress. Mr. Youd became a martyr to the missionary cause himself, dying from the effects of poison.[1]

[1] The life of Mr. Youd has been written by the Rev. Canon Veness in a book entitled, "Ten Years of Mission Life in British Guiana" (S. P. C. K.) We would recommend our readers to procure this book.

His work was apparently doomed to extinction, and his name is almost forgotten in the diocese; but he, though "unknown, is yet well known."

Several of our latest missions to the aborigines were in a great measure promoted by the zeal, success, and linguistic efforts of the Rev. W. H. Brett; and now from one end of the colony to the other there is an almost uninterrupted chain of mission-stations.

Thus in the extreme southern corner of our colony, on the river Corentyne, there is an interesting mission, which was established by the Rev. Canon Veness. In establishing this mission the Canon had recourse naturally for advice and help to the experienced pioneer of the Northern Rivers, and this mission was established in 1866. As Mr. Veness had a large charge of Creoles, he of course could work only as a volunteer, and he paid visits to the Mission regularly once a quarter. His first need was a catechist, and in June 1866 Mr. Brett thus wrote to Mr. Veness:—"I am rejoiced (under God) to see you arise to that work, saying it must be done, and would willingly help by any suggestion. Your first and great work is the man. Piety and zeal are more than other qualities and attainments." Then Mr. Brett asks the question, "Is there any habitation at Orealla which a teacher might for a time occupy? A *logie* would do at first for a chapel school." In another letter under date September of the same year he thus wrote:—"I hope you see land in your well-meant efforts for the Corentyne Indians, and may witness in a great degree their evangelisation—fruit that may abide—the revival of the all but extinguished embers of the good Moravians' fire (as you would call it); though it seems more like a rekindling of fresh materials, so long is it since the old flame died away. I send you a small additional trifle from the Pomeroon. $5

will not go far in itself, but when you can say that both in Dutch Guiana, and also near the borders of Venezuela there is deep sympathy felt with your efforts for a mission at Orealla, others nearer your scene of action will be, perhaps, led to identify the honour of good old Berbice with the work you have laid out, and which, as you said, '*must*, under God, be done.'" In a postscript he adds:—"I have mentioned to Mrs. Brett and my little ones what good work you have contemplated. They have contributed among them $5 more. I enclose cheque for $10, payable to your order as before. Go on in your good work, and may God be with you, until you see many of the aborigines drawn unto Him."

Five years later, when the Mission was fully established, Mr. Brett showed the same interest in the work. He wrote to Mr. Veness under date June 23, 1871:—"The Arawâk and Acawoio versions have now arrived at the Depository from S. P. C. K., and I have put up 100 copies for your Mission at Orealla. . . . I think they may be the means of exciting some little interest among the people, the Arawâk of the Corentyne, and doing some spiritual good. . . . I have read with great interest the account you have given of your missionary progress. God will, I trust, continue to bless your efforts for His glory and the Indians' good. Few things would give me more pleasure than to visit your district. Perhaps God may permit some day, though the prospect be somewhat remote at present." This Mr. Brett did in February 1872, while the founder was at home on furlough; and in writing to Mr. Veness the next year he states:—"As regards your work, I must say that I was very much surprised as well as gratified at seeing such a substantial schoolhouse. I had no idea you had built a framed house at all. . . . The chapel also is a very service-

able one for a mission in its mere early stages." This mission is still progressing; and lately another mission has been established at Epira, higher up on the same river, by the Rev. C. D. Dance. On the Berbice river there are several places of worship, at which the Indians attend, but the only purely Indian station is at Cumaka. On the Mahaicony Creek there was a mission at one time of some importance, but it is now almost abandoned. On the river Demerara we have many stations, but the purely Indian ones are at Muritáro, eighty-seven miles from Georgetown, and at Eneyudah, 165 miles from town. In 1868 Mr. Brett, accompanied by Archdeacon Jones, ascended the Demerara river for the purpose of establishing the latter Mission at the foot of the Great Falls. The account given of this and a subsequent visit paid by Mr. Brett is worthy of record :—

"We went, on that occasion, as far as Indians could be found on that river, spent in teaching them five days, and the result of the visit was to bring them down below the falls by hundreds. Mr. Couchman, who had been our pilot, then became their teacher. He instructed two young Acawoios, Taio and Jimbo, in the catechisms I had given him, and they taught the multitude of their countrymen. In that way they were being prepared for admission into the Church of Christ."

Seventeen months after that visit the chapel at Malali Rapids (about fifty miles below those falls) presented a spectacle which recalls the early days of the Christian Church.

The Bishop, accompanied by the Rev. Mr. Butt, who had built that chapel when stationed there some years before, found nearly the whole of the Demerara Acawoios there assembled to meet them. The sandy margin of the river was lined with wood-skins of all sizes, and the people who had come in them anxiously desired to be baptized.

After examination three hundred and eighty-six of various ages were admitted by that Holy Sacrament into the Church of Christ. The administration occupied two entire days. I was not present myself, but those who were have since told me of the striking spectacle then presented, described to me the throng of Indians, and the earnestness visible in their countenances as they knelt at the font, while the chapel floor streamed with the water which had flowed over them.

Four years later Mr. Brett again visited all the missions on the Demerara, on which occasion he saw another station newly established. He writes :—

"I was much surprised and gratified to find, about half-way down, a new mission, named Muritáro. It seemed to have sprung up spontaneously, since I was last there, under a young man of German extraction, named Lobertz. To him a number of Indians, from the wild and remote regions west of the Essequibo, had attached themselves. He was teaching them by means of our Acawoio books, though in a class of a hundred and fifty which I catechised there were but thirty pure Acawoios. . . . Yet they all understood the questions, and answered them correctly."

The missionary at present in charge of these stations is the Rev. A. Gwyther, who thus speaks of the debt the Church owes to Mr. Brett :—

"I consider Mr. Brett's catechisms, *i.e.*, the two short ones on the Creed and the Sacraments, to have been invaluable in teaching the elementary and radical truths of Christianity. To this end their simplicity and brevity have mainly contributed ; for the missionaries who have used them most have been the Indians themselves. It has been by no means uncommon for parties of from one to four or five persons just arrived from some far-off river or savannah,

where they have had no teacher but a passing guest or a member of their own village who has been to one of our mission-stations, to apply to me for baptism, and at once say, *without hesitation or mistake*, the Apostle's Creed, Ten Commandments, and Mr. Brett's catechism. These catechisms will bear supplementing to, of course, an indefinite extent, but in my opinion there is in them but one sentence which *needs* altering. Those on the Holy Scriptures I have not found of so much general use; indeed I think it a very great pity that Mr. Brett did not bestow the time which they took him upon the translation of the Acts of the Apostles instead; this, in addition to his admirable translation of St. Matthew's Gospel, would have put into our hands almost all we absolutely require."

On the rivers Essequibo and Mazzaruni we have also important mission-stations in the neighbourhood of the scenes of the labours of Bernau and Youd. These missions were established, in Mr. Brett's opinion, at a very opportune time by the present Archdeacon of Berbice, the Rev. Canon Farrar, B.D., who at the time was chaplain of Her Majesty's Penal Settlement on the Massaruni. Three important missions were originated by him; the first at a very picturesque spot between the Massaruni and the Cuyuni, called St. Edwards, and two others (in 1868 and 1870), called respectively "The Holy Name" and "St. Mary's," both on the Essequibo river. The venerable Archdeacon thus bears witness to the influence that Mr. Brett exercised over all the missionary work of the country. The Archdeacon writes, on the Feast of the Purification of the Blessed Virgin Mary, 1887 :—

"I can say most truthfully and with very great pleasure, *as at least paying a debt of gratitude*, that without Mr. Brett's translations the success of my work amongst the

Indians in the Essequibo, Cuyuni, and Mazaruni rivers would have been literally *the day of small things.* It was, however, simply astonishing, for the Indians subscribed for mission and general Church purposes $10,000 in the annual tax of four logs of timber, given 'willingly' by each family. And *the number added to the Church* was almost Pentecostal.

"By means of Mr. Brett's translations my black catechist, M'Clagan, was able successfully to carry on the mission-work, and could keep the Indians attached to the Mission *at a time when the temptation to stray was of the most powerful kind;* and so highly are these translations still prized that they are being reprinted in the monthly number of our *Guiana Churchman.*

"I remember Mr. Brett himself being taken aback, as he approached the St. Edwards Mazaruni Mission, at the 'buzzing sound' of the Indians repeating his translations of Creed, &c., led by M'Clagan; and the late Rev. W. E. Pierce, at his first visit to Potaro, describes a similar surprise, only by some 1500 instead of 200; and Mr. Pierce almost uses Mr. Brett's words of surprise.

"Mr. Brett's name will be remembered as long as the Church of Guiana lasts; and it will shine brighter and brighter unto the dawn of the perfect day; for the souls that he has saved, and is still instrumental in turning to righteousness—for *though dead he yet speaks through his translations*—will be so many jewels in his crown, and will make it shine as so many stars for ever and ever."

We shall now give an account of the last outpost that the Church has set up in Guiana, which may be called the most important of all our missions. It is the Mission on the River Potaro, a tributary of the Essequibo. It was established at the earnest request of the Indians, especially the Patamunas, a race connected with the Acawoios, about

1876. The Mission was first visited by the Rev. C. D. Dance, who was then stationed on the Demerara River. After this Mr. Lobertz, a catechist, was sent; but the work grew to such dimensions that the Rev. W. E. Pierce, who about that time had been appointed to the charge of the missions established by Archdeacon Farrar, was deputed by the Bishop to the district to see what could be done. Mr. Pierce was astonished at what he saw; he saw a chapel which had been erected, and then, as he approached it, he heard "a buzzing sound, as of innumerable bees." That sound was an effect of the work of Mr. Brett. "Hundreds of men, women, and children were teaching or learning in their own tongue, and with the low voice common to Indians, the Lord's Prayer, Apostles' Creed, Ten Commandments, and even Biblical catechisms." At this station 1398 Indians of various nationalities were, after examination, baptized by Mr. Pierce in the river during that single visit! This reminds one of Pentecostal days, when nations were literally born in a day. When the aged and infirm missionary heard this news in his English home he thus wrote:—"Seldom has any portion of the Church's great mission-field seemed more ripe unto the harvest than that land which has so suddenly, and as it were spontaneously, stretched forth her hands unto God." The Mission very soon after this had to lament the death of Mr. Pierce, who was drowned, together with his wife and two children, whilst shooting one of the rapids on his way home.

The Mission has now (1887) a resident missionary, the Rev. F. L. Quick, and the work is so well established that it is believed it will rival in importance the Mission of the Pomeroon.

From all this the reader will see what great influence Mr. Brett's work exercised over the whole diocese. He was,

however, of a most retiring disposition, and sought for no praise or popularity. He seemed to feel that any praise to himself was a slight to his Master, and he attributed all his success to the hand of God. He also exercised great influence through his charming books, some of which are standard works; and many have received great pleasure as well as information from his writings, while many of the missionaries that have succeeded Mr. Brett have been fired with zeal by means of them.

But his influence was not only felt in the mission-fields of Guiana, it was felt at home also. Mr. Brett and his devoted wife found time, among their other duties connected with the church, to educate their own children, and their children have done no discredit to their parents' training. The following letter is from his youngest son. This letter was written from Loughborough, November 13, 1886, and will give some idea of the home training which must have been bestowed on the writer:—

"My dear Mother,—Thanks for the 'Dawn of Day,'* now returned (containing account of the consecration of the new Holy Trinity Church). What a nice letter the Bishop wrote you, and how nice it is to hear of the universal respect in which father's memory is held, I might say revered, in Demerara!

"'Lives of great men all remind us we may make our lives sublime,
And departing leave behind us footprints in the sands of time.'

Deep and indelible are the footprints left by father. Ages may roll, and yet, when all things by time are altered, and men as individuals are forgotten, lost to sight, and recorded only in the musty pages of history, the work

* Localised in the diocese of Guiana.

he did will live. Christianity will have been planted (and where planted it never dies) in the interior of Guiana, and all races of the future will profit, perhaps unconsciously, but still undeniably, by the life-work of the 'Apostle of our Indians' (so called by the Bishop). The fold of Christ has been, and will be, added to by the work. Civilisation has been spread where once was only ignorant barbarism. Our great country has been strengthened by the opening up of her colonies, and thus has work been done, lasting, everlasting work, by one too modest ever to take the position he earned on earth, but who *must* gain a just and enormous reward in heaven. Would God there were some like him!—more men to live as examples and to plant their 'footprints' deep in 'the sands of time.' But I wander from my reply to your letter. If you think well, please thank the Bishop for me for his very kind message to your sons, and tell him I wish with all my heart I had some one like him near me, to whom I feel I *could appeal* for help and advice in times of doubt or difficulty. Here I know no one to whom I can conscientiously go, no one who would take a deep, real interest in my affairs.—Your ever-loving son,

A. S. BRETT."

CHAPTER XIV.

Last Visit of W. H. Brett to his old Missions—The Work of the Rev. W. Heard—Medical Work—Orphanage—Kwabannah—The first Indian Teacher—Wakapoa—The Rev. F. L. Quick—The Rev. G. W. Matthews—Statistics.

In the year 1878 the missionary in charge of the Pomeroon missions, the Rev. Walter Heard, went to England on furlough, and Mr. Brett visited his old stations once more, and for the last time. He saw much to cheer him. Everything was in thorough order, and showed that the old missionary's mantle had fallen on no unworthy shoulders. Thus Mr. Brett writes of his last visit :—

"It was a lovely and peaceful Sunday evening. The Moruca before us was shining in the rays of the setting sun and gliding calmly through a wide extent of forest, in which two lines of taller trees marked the course of tributary streams. My first visits to these rivers had taken place nearly forty years before. Each had its peculiar association. At Washiba Hill, near the head of one, the Caribs had, soon after that visit, made their first attempt at 'church' building; on the other I had met with a most unfriendly reception from the uncouth Waraus; and there also their first favourable movement towards the gospel had afterwards begun.

"A great change had taken place since those days. The people of those races, and of two others, had joined our congregation on that hill, no longer hostile to us, or to each other, but all worshipping together in peace. Though not

so numerous as the assembly of two thousand who had there met the Governor on his visit to the opened mound, they had become far more decent and civilised, both sexes being now neatly clad, and all apparently better off in their earthly circumstances.

They were just then departing after even-song, and their clean white garments formed an agreeable spectacle as they streamed across the plain or entered the paths which led to their forest homes. Some companies, who had come by water, were going to the river-side to re-embark in their canoes, and a number were lingering in groups. . . .

"To bid, without emotion, a last adieu to those old scenes, with their heart-cherished associations, was impossible. But the time had come. Increasing bodily infirmities had warned me that my forest journeys were all ended, and that I must now, with deep thankfulness to Him whose undeserved mercy had protected me so long, leave canoe and wood-skin voyages to younger and stronger men.

"May the Divine blessing be on all who seek to spread the knowledge of the Saviour's name amongst the many races and languages of Guiana."

It will be remembered that the last time on which, previous to this, Mr. Brett visited the Indian missions was in 1875, and that he then gave over the charge of them to Mr. Heard. In 1876, although Mr. Heard gave his undivided attention to the Mission, he found so much to do that he wrote to the Church Society :—"Single-handed as I am, but little can be achieved; our well-known and most hardly tried Bishop cannot do more than he has done for the Indians under my immediate superintendence." Mr. Heard desired to obtain the help of another ordained missionary. About this time he established an Orphanage. He thus wrote to the G. D. Church Society in 1876 about

this subject. "My purpose is to collect from the various places the utterly friendless orphans, and keep them under my own supervision at Cabacaburi, where they will be educated, fed, and taught to gain their own livelihood respectably." The Orphanage began with two inmates.

Mr. Heard, who had been brought up at St. Augustine's College, Canterbury, and therefore had undergone the usual training at the County Hospital in that city, had a fair knowledge of medicine. This proved invaluable to his people, and he has treated many difficult cases referred to him with a great measure of success. In 1876 he writes :— "On an average forty persons receive medicines monthly, but when physicked the Indian must also be fed, as he never has anything more than dry cassava and a little bush meat, quite enough for him when in health, but not in weakness. During this year a young man (an Acawoio) was ill four months, and nearly the whole of that time not only had food but wine and stimulants been supplied by the Mission." Another great improvement in the missions effected by Mr. Heard was the instruction imparted to the children in manual labour, he himself showing a splendid example. The writer has seen the missionary, axe in hand, felling trees, caulking and painting boats, and doing everything that was necessary to teach the Indians the various arts which civilised men employ to make their lives worth living. In the same year Mr. Heard visited many of the places which had become known as the localities where Mr. Brett had gone in his early days, the tract of land lying between the Pomeroon and Manawarin rivers and the Wakapoa and Koraia lake district. There Mr. Heard found Arawâks and Waraus—"for the most part Christians who have lapsed into heathenism." Is it any wonder that the missionary began to feel that there was need of estab-

lishing other missions, and to clamour for the additional help of a brother missionary?

In 1879 a new church was built at Cabacaburi. It is a very handsome and strong building, and the chancel is fitted with choir stalls. There is a surpliced choir, which at this time was carefully trained by Mr. Heard's step-daughter, Miss Townsend, who, together with her mother, took a great interest in everything connected with the missions and the welfare of the Indians. To hear the church's service sweetly sung by the Indians, so reverent and quiet, is a treat which, once enjoyed, can never be forgotten. In this same year Mr. Heard shows what great improvements had been made in the Mission. "I think," he writes to the Church Society, "our buildings here are now completed at last. We have a good, decent church, with all the necessary furniture, schoolmaster's residence, mission-house, schoolhouse, and the orphanage," in which at this time there were nine inmates.

Mr. Heard also adds in the same report that he had visited the Waini twice during 1879, and that he had made up his mind to establish a Mission there, and to station a catechist at Kwabanneh. This he was enabled to do, and it must be gratifying to our readers to know that the Mission was placed under the charge of an *Indian* catechist, an Acawoio, Jacobus Ingles by name, taught and brought up by Mr. Heard himself. This is a noteworthy fact, for Jacobus was the first Indian teacher employed in this Mission. In 1880 Mr. Heard was able to report, "This little Mission is going on steadily and well." The church is a plain, spacious building, a "model of Indian churches," built entirely by the Indians, Mr. Heard supplying them with nails and tools, and teaching them how to use them. The writer cannot forget a visit paid to this distant Mission

towards the end of 1883. The place looked charming; many houses had sprung up here and there, and everything appeared clean and in good order. The services were also well rendered, partly in English, partly in Acawoio, and to see the wardens during the offertory march up with the offerings of the people was a sight worth seeing. "Silver and gold" they had none, but they gave the best that their settlements produced. Some brought baskets of yams, others baskets of various kinds of gum, others "Indian curiosities," and they were offered by the priest on God's altar—a sweet and acceptable gift.

By August of the same year another Mission had been established at a small creek called the Wakapoa. It is a tributary of the Pomeroon, into the left bank of which it runs about three miles from the mouth. This Mission was also placed under the charge of an Indian, an Arawâk, Alexander Boyon by name. It was also a fortunate, though an unusual, thing for Alexander and his work that he was married to a Warau wife; and as he had to work not only among his own nation, but amongst the Waraus, the fitness of the marriage is easily seen. A church was also erected at this place, and all the buildings wanted for the work were cheerfully and willingly put up by the Indians. A third Indian as an assistant teacher had also been employed at Cabacaburi. It is hoped that some of these teachers at no far distant date will be considered fit for the higher offices in the Church of God.

To show how much the work had prospered, it should be stated that in January 1883 Mr. Heard had to keep in order no less than twenty-one buildings at the several missions, as well as provide for the care of eleven boats. Another of Mr. Heard's great desires was accomplished this same year. A young missionary, not old enough to be ordained, arrived

from St. Augustine's College, Canterbury, Mr. F. L. Quick, who was stationed at Waramuri. Mr. Heard writes of him six months after his arrival (December 1883):—"I am glad to report that so far he is doing very well. He is liked by the people, and is earnest and active. The attendances at the Sunday services have already increased." In 1884 Mr. Quick was ordained deacon, and Mr. Heard was promoted to the Rectory of St. John's, a parish contiguous to that of the Holy Trinity. As Mr. Quick was only in deacon's orders, the priestly ministrations of the church were performed by Mr. Heard. In 1886 there was again another change, Mr. Quick being sent up to supervise a mission on the Potaro. He was succeeded at Waramuri by the Rev. G. W. Matthews, also of St. Augustine's College, Canterbury, and the work promises well. Everything seems to be in excellent order. From what has been said before, it will be seen that to Mr. Heard the Church owes a deep debt of gratitude for consolidating the work done by the pioneer Brett, and also for enlarging the borders of the Church. As Mr. Heard is still in our midst (and long may he remain !), and knowing that he, like his predecessor, hates all praise, no more need be said than this—"*Si monumentum quæris, circumspici*," the missions in the Pomeroon, Moruca, Wakapoa, and Waini.

It may be interesting, before concluding this chapter, to state that the number of baptisms that have taken place at the various stations since their establishment are as follows:—

From 1838–1843, as recorded in the parish church registers of Holy Trinity, there were baptized by the Rev. J. H. Duke 98 Indians.

The following are taken from the various registers at the missions:—Cabacaburi (1843 to 24th February 1887),

2096; Waramuri, 1960; Waini (1882 to 24th February 1887), 286; Hackney, 530; which shows a total of 4970.

May God increase our missions, and so enlarge the borders of His glorious Kingdom. For this the faithful in all lands must ever pray.

CHAPTER XV.

Last Days—Studious to the End—At "Bouruma," Paignton, in South Devon—Last Hours—Death—The News in British Guiana—A Memorial Window.

We are now to dwell on the last days of Mr. Brett. They were, nearly all of them, days of painful suffering. The days of privation which he had spent in the bush were now telling on him. However, as soon as possible after Mr. Brett's arrival in England in 1879, he waited on the Archbishop of Canterbury, who received him most kindly. Mr. Brett had a twofold object in making this visit; first, to express his respectful thanks in person to the Archbishop for his degree of B.D., and secondly, to obtain his grace's permission to officiate occasionally within his province, which permission was most readily accorded. Mr. Brett joined his family at Loughborough, in Leicestershire, and obtained from the Bishop of Peterborough a license to officiate in his diocese.

The clergy in Loughborough received him courteously, especially the late Venerable Henry Fearon, rector of All Saints and Archdeacon of Leicester, who styled him "the Apostle of the Guiana missionaries—a St. Paul amongst them." Mr. Brett preached a few times, at the earnest solicitations of his friends, but each time he said he was unequal to the exertion. He also gave a lecture at Warner's Schoolroom, but was obliged to decline a second invitation.

RIVER SCENE. *P.* 150.

The winter of 1879–80 was a very severe one, and tried him greatly, as also did the following one. A change to the sea-coast was deemed advisable, and in July 1881 the family removed to Westgate-on-Sea, in the Isle of Thanet. Here he preached a very few times; and here, as in Loughborough, his sermons were listened to with profound interest, and the general remark amongst people was, they hoped he would preach again. But he was soon obliged to decline all engagements to preach, and spent his time in daily morning and evening walks, in reading and copying some of his old sermons; not, he said, that he should ever preach them, but it occupied his time and thoughts; he could not be always idle. Indeed he never was idle. Everything was done by him with precision and regularity, and two sermons weekly were at this time his self-imposed task, and he completed over a hundred. He generally retired to bed at 9.30, and always rose early, summer and winter. He always read a chapter in his Greek Testament before his eight o'clock breakfast; this he looked upon as an imperative duty. In March 1885 he made the remark to Mrs. Brett, "I cannot read my Greek Testament as I used to do, and I cannot understand it." Her reply was, "Well, never mind; that is not an absolute necessity for you to do now." "Not an absolute necessity! Why, what is to become of me if I must give up my Greek Testament?" From this time he visibly failed. One study after another was given up; even books for recreation and newspapers from the old colony, as well as home ones, were all laid aside; but he never complained. He said his work was done, his task accomplished, the end was approaching, and all he wanted was to go to his rest.

The winters in Westgate were very trying, and both Mr. and Mrs. Brett were rapidly breaking down. It was felt

that neither of them could risk another winter there; so it was decided to try a more genial locality. This time Paignton, in South Devon, was selected, and in July 1885 the family removed thither, in the hope that both he and his partner would be benefited and some degree of health regained. Alas! a vain hope as regarded Mr. Brett, and in August his consent was very reluctantly given to call in medical aid. From the first the case was pronounced hopeless. "He has worked his brain completely out," was the doctor's verdict. Everything was done that skill and tender nursing could do, but in spite of all his sufferings daily increased; and months were spent in anxious, painful, but uncomplaining endurance on his part, and no less on the part of his loving wife and eldest daughter, whose trying lot it was to witness day by day the increasing extinction of that once bright intellect, which had won the admiration of all who knew him; for in former years his intellect never failed him, whatever might be the subject or whoever the author, ancient or modern. The last time he attended church was one evening in September, when, with assistance, he walked home with great difficulty, all the way repeating, "Lord, now lettest thou Thy servant depart in peace according to Thy word." After this he was unable to walk much out of doors, and a Bath-chair was procured for him, in which he went out almost daily. On one occasion (in January 1886) he was much distressed about his youngest daughter, and could not be persuaded she was safe and well. She was, indeed, very ill at the time, but her mother did not know of it.

Another time he was repeatedly asking for his eldest son, who was in San Francisco. At last Mrs. Brett fetched his photograph and showed it to the anxious father. He recognised it, and said, "Henry! my Henry! I shall never

see him again," and burst into tears. Mrs. Brett replied, "Yes, you will see him in heaven by-and-by." "Ah yes, I shall." And he was content; he never asked for him again.

One evening his nurse told Mrs. Brett that he had been asking for "Stephen." She supposed he meant the youngest son; but as he had then quieted she did not reawaken the memory. This son's second name is "Stephen." He went a few days after to see his father—a melancholy satisfaction, but one denied to the son in the far-distant land.

Towards the end of November 1885 every one saw that his end was approaching, and soon after it was found necessary to have a male attendant to help the nursing. Mr. Brett's sufferings were intense during this time, and the anxieties of his wife and his daughter were very great. He did not take to his bed until January the 28th. From that day until February the 7th he lived on milk and brandy, and from the last-named date until he expired no nourishment whatever passed his lips. He was nearly always unconscious. But every now and then he had lucid intervals, and at different times he asked for his several children, and to Carrie his last words were, "Carrie, are you there? Still at your post of duty!" The last time he spoke to his wife he said that she had been to him "a tower of strength in time of need. Lord, defend her from the power of the enemy, and keep her in perpetual peace." On the Feast of the Purification, the week before his death, there was a sudden and lucid moment, and he then received the Holy Communion. A priest was also in attendance just before his death, who read the commendatory prayer. After this he said that he felt ready to go to his Master. A few moments after he was lost to everything and every

one about him. On the Sunday evening another lucid interval came, and he asked of his attendant, "Are my robes all prepared?"

The attendant replied, "Yes, sir, all are ready."

"Are they bright and shining?"

"Yes, sir, beautifully."

"That is well; I am soon going home now. Pass me not by, gentle Saviour."

On Monday again, while Mrs. Brett was earnestly watching her dying husband, he said—

> "Jesus, lover of my soul,
> Let me to Thy bosom fly."

He repeated this twice. He again seemed lost whilst his wife finished the hymn.

After this he said, "Lord, have mercy upon us; Christ, have mercy upon us." This also was repeated twice. These were the last words he spoke. On Wednesday the 10th of February, at 7.15 P.M., his pure spirit left its home of clay and soared heavenward to receive the reward of "a good and a faithful servant." May his holy, useful life be an example for us all to follow!

About the day and hour of his death there is this extraordinary coincidence: he died, almost to the hour, on the very day on which forty-six years before he had left the English shores for those of Guiana; and we feel sure that, had it been possible for him to select the day of his departure to his eternal rest, there is no day he would have preferred to that.

Mr. Brett lived always in preparation of death. "Memento Mori" was well impressed on his mind.

At the funeral his body was, at the special request of his

widow, taken into the fine old church at Paignton, thence to the cemetery, a lovely spot, whence a splendid view can be had over land and sea, whose ever-varying, ever-beautiful waves seem to unite the land of his labours with the land of his birth and of his death.

As soon as the news of the demise of this noble missionary reached British Guiana all those who had known him, as well as those who had heard of him, expressed their sincere regret and sorrow. The parish bell of his old church in Essequibo tolled for one hour, and on the following Sunday, when his funeral sermon was preached, although the weather was very inclement, the people flocked to the church from all the surrounding villages. The press paid its homage of respect to departed worth, and the people of British Guiana, from His Excellency the Governor of the colony (Sir Henry Turner Irving, K.C.M.G.), His Lordship the Bishop of Guiana, down to the humblest of Mr. Brett's old parishioners, Mrs. Brett and children joining, subscribed towards a memorial stained-glass window to the "Apostle of the Indians," at the east end of the new church of the Holy Trinity, representing St. Paul, the great apostle of the Indians, and the Blessed Virgin, in whose honour the first chapel built in the Pomeroon, at Hackney, is dedicated. Two lights of this window (executed by Mr. C. Evans of Warwick Street, London), which form the memorial, are the embodiment, so to speak, of purity and of the zealous and untiring preaching of the Word of God, and symbolise two characteristic traits in the individuality of him to whom they were erected. The inscription underneath each light is, "To the honour of God, and in memory of W. H. Brett, rector of this parish, and Apostle of the Indians, 1840–79. Obiit 1886."

Well did Archdeacon Farrar say, that "Mr. Brett's name

will be remembered as long as the Church of Guiana lasts; and it will shine brighter and brighter unto the dawn of the perfect day. For the souls that he has saved, and is still instrumental in turning to righteousness—for *though dead he yet speaks through his translations*—will be so many jewels in his crown, and will make it shine as so many stars for ever and ever."

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